



Thursday, January 4, 2018

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Backlash over petition bid to change street's name

PROUD TO BE FROM BELL END

REPORT BY PETER MADELEY

A CAMPAIGN by residents of Bell End to change the name of their road appears to have hit the buffers.

Now other people have started a rival petition to keep the name and it garnered almost 2,000 signatures within hours of appearing on change.org, while the petition to get rid of the name stood at around 50.

Campaigners said residents of the Rowley Regis street had become a 'laughing stock', with children who live there teased at school as a result of its double entendre name. They launched a petition to change it to a similar sounding – but less offensive – Bell Road.



Bell End street sign

But this week hundreds leaped to the defence of Bell End, with many calling for the petition to be dismissed.

Bell End has received enormous backing from readers of The Chronicle's sister newspaper the Express & Star, with nearly 90 per cent of more than 4,000 readers taking part in an online poll calling for the name to remain.

Lauren White said: "Never once have I had a problem when I've told someone I live 'just off Bell End', if anything it's always caused a little giggle and more often than not, a conversation starter."

Mine

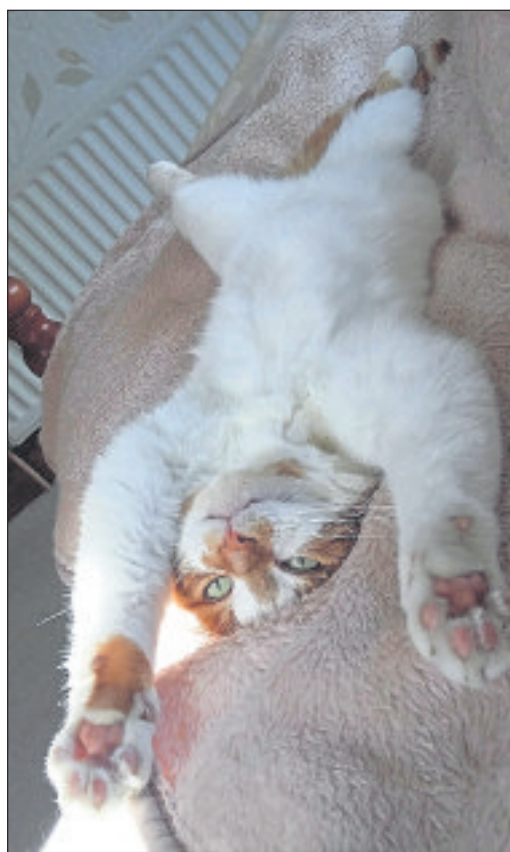
The new petition was started by Linda George and is called 'Leave the Historic Name of Bell End Alone!'. A statement says: "Bell End is an historic name in Rowley Regis, believed to be named after a mine in the locality."

Chelsie Stanaway said the name would never die, even if it were to be changed. "Once a Bell End always a Bell End," she said.

The street is in Rowley Regis and Blackheath wards. Sandwell Council said it would look at the issue if residents sent them a petition.

Councillor Barbara Price said changing the name would be a 'lengthy and complex' process. "There would have to be a public consultation and the Post Office would also be involved," she added.

NOW IT'S BEDTIME FOR TEDDY OUR PRIZE PET



Time to chill out – Teddy relaxing on the bed at home

ONE week on and all this attention is just wearing out poor Teddy. For those readers who missed the announcement last week this much-loved moggy – now seen chilling on the bed – won our Animal Crackers competition with the picture of him in the garden dovecote.

According to owner Vicky Sterrett, from Bloxwich, he just loves to get himself into lots of tight spots but here he is looking a lot more laid back. Obviously loving all the attention, he was a very clear winner with our many readers who emailed or posted in their votes.

Shortlist

From the shortlist of 10, taken from the more than 500 entries we had sent in, he was a clear winner. Vicky, from Bloxwich, said Teddy found her four years ago, arriving on her doorstep as a stray. She found that he wasn't microchipped and was about four years old. Vicky fell in love instantly and decided to keep him. "We have always thought he was a superstar and winning this competition has proved that other people think so as well," said Vicky.

"After speaking to Teddy we have decided to donate the £100 prize money to Walsall & Wolverhampton Cats Protection for all the amazing work they do," Vicky added.

Our shortlist included dogs, cats, guinea pigs, a tortoise, rabbit and even a hedgehog but it was Teddy who captured so many hearts.

He has a cheeky personality and is a very busy boy spending most of his time in the garden, in the greenhouse and of course the dovecote.

This was specially made by a carpenter at a local day care centre for adults with learning disabilities.



The winning picture



COMMUNITY

Hopes on future of derelict church

A CHURCH that has stood empty since it closed a year ago could be transformed this year, thanks to a Halesowen dance company.

St John's United Reformed Church in Stourbridge went on the market in May after it shut following its final service on New Year's Day 2017.

Dance company, Danse Vivante said it wanted to keep the church as a community space but for sale signs have remained at the building since. Pippa Coley, who has trained with the dance academy for four years, said the interest was still there.

She said: "We are still interested in it and at the minute and we are going through the board of commissioners for the final decision. It is a long process but they are keeping us informed. We have high hopes for the future for it."

The group says it hopes to keep the Garde II building intact, but with minor alterations inside. Councillor Nicolas Barlow, who represents the Wollaston and Stourbridge Town ward, said: "This is great news that the building will be utilised."

FIREFIGHTERS

Documentary starts with store explosion

A DOCUMENTARY revealing life on the front line in West Midlands Fire Service will air next week with the first episode showing the response to a bomb explosion in Blackheath.

Firefighters have been given state-of-the-art heat-proof helmet and body cameras to showcase their daring roles first hand.

The series called 'Into The Fire' begins on the Freeview and satellite Really Channel on Monday at 8pm. It becomes the latest fly-on-the-wall series highlighting the work of the emergency services in the West Midlands, after the series 'Ambulance' was shown on BBC One looking into the role of West Midlands Ambulance Service.

The first Into The Fire episode focuses on a busy day, just five days after the Manchester terror attack, where fire crews dealt with an explosion in a toilet cubicle at the Sainsbury's store in Blackheath.

A teenaged boy was put behind bars following the incident on May 27.

INSIDE

HONOUR FOR SCOUTMASTER



PAGE 2

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2 CONTENTS

PETER RHODES	6
LETTERS	7
2018 CALENDAR	18-19
THE TICKET	21
BRAIN GYM	27
PROPERTY	29
MOTORING	33-34
SPORT	35-36
CONTACT US	

EDITORIAL:
Tel: 01384 353201/01384 353205
E-mail: dudley.chron@expressandstar.co.uk

SPORTS:
Tel: 01902 319453
E-mail: chron.sport@expressandstar.co.uk

PHOTOGRAPHIC: Tel: 01902 319430
E-mail: picturedesk@expressandstar.co.uk

ADVERTISING: Nicola Cope
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MOTORING: Liz Barratt
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E-mail: liz.barratt@expressandstar.co.uk

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DISTRIBUTION: Paul Jones
Tel: 01902 319990
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Scouting stalwart given MBE at 96



Scout leader Derek Elton MBE

A RESPECTED Scout leader with more than 80 years' experience is among the unsung heroes in Dudley to be recognised in the New Year's Honours.

Derek Elton has been awarded an MBE at the age of 96 for decades of service to scout groups in Stourbridge.

The great-grandfather has been part of the scouts from the age of 15 and is still involved four years shy of his 100th birthday. Mr Elton, from Wollaston, was awarded the Silver Wolf – the

highest scouting accolade – in 2008 and admitted news of his award came as a huge shock.

"I am very, very shocked to receive it," he said. "I am absolutely thrilled to bits but it came as a huge shock."

Mr Elton joined the 1st Stourbridge St Thomas group as a teenager and went on to become cub master. He is less actively involved these days but remains president of the Kinver Scout Camp and vice-president of the West

Mercia Scout County. Meanwhile, a former housing association boss who provided homes to vulnerable families across Dudley has also been made an MBE.

Jane Clarke, 62, retired last year after almost 30 years at the helm of Churches Housing Association of Dudley and District (CHADD). She said: "I can't quite believe it. I led an incredible team of very committed people who are the ones who really deserve this award."

Dedicated community servants are honoured

RESPECTED community figures from all walks of life have been recognised in the Queen's New Year's Honours.

Among them is Alan Tuckett, from the University of Wolverhampton, who has received the most notable recognition. He will collect a knighthood in recognition of his work in developing further education.

University vice chancellor, Professor Geoff Layer said: "Throughout his illustrious career, Professor Sir Alan Tuckett has forged a reputation as 'the voice of adult education' and his work has been dedicated to breaking down barriers enabling adults to access education."

"Forty years after helping to establish the very idea of the 'adult learner' in the 1970s, today he inspires the next generation of educators in his role as professor at the University of Wolverhampton."

Ultimate

Gordon Evans, chairman of Stafford Town Football Club, receives the British Empire Medal (BEM), as does the driving force behind Willenhall Rugby Club, Elyfn Pugh.

Mr Pugh, 83, has served the club for more than 60 years and his dedication was honoured a year ago when England rugby head coach Eddie Jones presented him with an RFU lifetime achievement award at Twickenham. He said: "I thought going to Twickenham was the ultimate accolade but this is a fantastic honour."

Pauline Hodgetts has been awarded the BEM for services to her community. She has strived for 40 years to make her home town Tipton a better place, leading the friends group at Victoria Park and helping to run a sons of rest group allowing pensioners to socialise with friends.

She said: "You just carry on on



Diana Seeney, MBE, for her work with The Girls Brigade



Former Dudley Mayor Steve Waltho MBE



Pauline Hodgetts BEM, of Tipton

doing things because you really enjoy doing them and then you find out you've been recognised like this. It's absolutely fantastic."

Judith Morris, from Halesowen, is another to have been awarded a BEM for almost 60 years of service with St John Ambulance. Mrs Morris joined as a cadet in 1959 and worked her way up to become a unit manager. She is now responsible for training up the next generation of lifesavers.

She said: "I didn't expect it at all. It



Elyfn Pugh, right, BEM

is just an honour to think I have been recognised and appreciated for what I do and the volume of work I do."

Diana Seeney, from Wall Heath, has been honoured for services to the Girls' Brigade. She said: "I am so excited. I was very surprised when I heard about this. I think that when you do volunteering work you don't expect to get recognition for it."

The former Mayor of Dudley Steve Waltho, who is a councillor in the town, has been made an MBE for



Judith Morris BEM, of Halesowen

services to local government in the Dudley borough. He said: "I'm deeply honoured, very humbled, I just work for the good of others."

There was also recognition for a giant of industry. Paul Strothers, from Wolverhampton, was former chief executive of aerospace firm Zodiac, which made seats for aeroplanes. He has been awarded an MBE for his work in the industry. David Harcourt was awarded an MBE for services to Stourbridge.

MP calls for hospital car parking fees to be axed

AN MP has vowed not to give up on his campaign to abolish hospital car parking charges.

Dudley North MP Ian Austin said 'something must be done' after figures showed the region's hospitals were raking in millions in parking fees.

Hospitals in the Black Country raked in more than £5m in parking charges in just one year, new figures show.

Dudley Group NHS Foundation Trust, which runs Russells Hall, made £471,000 in 2016/17, but most of the parking revenue was taken by a private finance initiative firm.

Parking at Russells Hall ranges in price from £1.50 for up to 30 minutes to £5.60 for up to 24 hours.

Sandwell and West Birmingham Hospitals NHS Trust, which runs Sandwell General Hospital and Rowley Regis Hospital, made £2.4m. Parking at Sandwell General costs £2.80 for up to an hour to £5.30 for up to 24 hours. At Rowley Regis it costs £2.80 for up to six hours and £5.30 for up to 24 hours.

Mr Austin said: "I don't see how we should pay such a huge amount when we want to go for hospital treatment or see a loved one or friend in hospital."

"It is especially bad for people who are going to and from hospitals on a regular basis. Something must be done."

Mr Austin also responded to an online poll in The Chronicle's sister publication The Express & Star which showed 75 per cent of readers believed the parking charges should be scrapped.

He said: "I'm not surprised about the strength of feeling."

Man faces trial on driving charges

A 28-year-old motorist denied driving dangerously and attempting to cause grievous bodily harm to seven people during an incident near a Stourbridge school nearly 16 months ago.

Kevin Campbell, of Vickers Walk, Stourbridge, pleaded not guilty to eight charges when he appeared at Wolverhampton Crown Court with charges relating to the driving of a red Ford Focus B Max VRM in Hob Green Road on September 12, 2016. He was remanded on bail for trial on July 16.

Developers back cancer charity work

WHITE House Cancer Support, based in Dudley, has received a £2,500 donation from business leaders the Richardson family. Manager Caroline Webb said: "The money will be used towards developing services both here at the White House and at our outreach locations."

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Delegation in visit for pointers on cremation

A CHINESE delegation visited Sandwell to learn about the UK's approach to burial and cremation.

It comes as controversial plans for liquid cremation, earmarked for Rowley Regis crematorium, were put on hold, marking a setback for Sandwell Council.

A party from the Chinese Ministry of Civil Affairs visited Sandwell Valley Crematorium. They were met by Councillor David Hosell, cabinet member for highways and environment.

Councillor Hosell said: "It was a pleasure to welcome delegates from China, who were all experienced senior officials. Given the extensive breadth of excellent services and facilities provided by our bereavement team, the federation felt there was no better place for the delegation to visit to see how this should be delivered."

The delegation was invited by the Federation of Burial and Cremation Authorities.

Rick Powell, secretary and executive officer with the federation, said he was delighted that Sandwell had been willing to host the meeting after he had been asked by the Chinese government to provide a training session.

Delegates wanted to have a better understanding of the approach to laws and regulations, the structure of UK burial and cremation services, codes of practice and service delivery.

Nine homes are proposed for site

HOUSES could be built on the site of a former food distribution business near Stourbridge under new plans.

Dudley-based Horgan Homes and Developments Ltd has unveiled proposals for land off Hackmans Gate Lane in Clent.

The site was previously used by H&H Chilled Foods which specialised in the production of dairy produce, storage and distribution of food and drink.

All three of the original commercial buildings on the site have been demolished.

A planning application for nine detached houses has now been submitted to planning bosses at Wyre Forest District Council. A decision is expected within the next three months.

Group launched

A COLLEGE has launched a friends group to encourage the public to use its facilities. The Friends of Halesowen College offers discounts at its salon and restaurant. Call 0121 6027627 or email friends@halesowen.ac.uk

Trade support just the business for town



Barry Wheeler, Eve O'Connor and Wayne Edwards of the BID

A BUSINESS group has revealed its primary focus for 2018 will be to support traders in its home town.

The Halesowen Business Improvement District (BID) says it will hold regular networking and workshop events for people to get involved.

The group, which operates in Halesowen town centre, has also called on businesses to get in touch to help bring about the suggested changes to boost footfall and visitor experience.

Wayne Edwards, who is chairman of the Halesowen BID, said: "The year 2018 will be a fantastic year for businesses in Halesowen."

"Not only will they have the unwavering support of the BID, the BID will also work to encourage outside trade and investors in Halesowen by marketing to the outer regions of the Black Country."

The BID is recruiting a business manager to help establish a strong business community.

A digital directory for businesses in Halesowen could also be launched as part of ambitious plans to boost trade. Mr Wheeler said: "You would be surprised how many people aren't aware what is in the town."

The BID was launched last year after traders backed the move following a ballot and approval was given by Dudley Council bosses. The BID has a five-year contract. See halesowenbid.co.uk website.

MP speaks out over GP surgeries merger plan

THE town's MP has spoken out against plans to close two GP surgeries in Halesowen and has urged patients to have their say over the proposals.

The two surgeries, currently form of a group of three, are set to be merged into one surgery based at Halesowen Health Centre on Birmingham Street.

A six-week consultation on the closure of Coombswood and Tenlands surgeries ends on January 22, which will then report to the Dudley Clinical Commissioning Group for a final decision.

Halesowen and Rowley Regis MP James Morris said: "GP services work best when they are in the heart of the communities that they serve, this is so that patients can form a relationship with their GP and for them to be as easily accessible as possible. I am not convinced that these plans would benefit patients, but are being solely made as a business decision."

The Conservative MP was also concerned about the timing of the consultation exercise.

Participate

"I want to make sure that all patients have an opportunity to participate in this consultation, to ensure that an accurate view of these proposals is heard. It's really important each and every patient takes part."

"I do have some concerns about the way in which this consultation is being handled, especially as it is over the Christmas and New Year break."

"I will be watching this very closely to make sure it is a fair and transparent process."

In a letter to patients Dr Ruth Hearn, from Stourside Medical Practice, which runs the surgeries, said money saved from running two sites would be spent on providing an extra GP on one day a week.



Proud parents Dannie and Carl with newborn baby Jasmine

Oh baby! What a wedding present

A PREGNANT bride's wedding day became extra special after she went into labour at her reception.

Dannie Mountford, of Rowley Regis, was 36 weeks and two days pregnant when she got married to partner Carl on December 18.

Dannie and Carl were convinced their little girl wouldn't arrive until her due date in January. But at their evening reception at Hot Shots in Langley, Dannie's waters broke when in her wedding dress and dancing with her new husband.

She was rushed to City Hospital and gave birth to baby Jasmine in the early hours of the following day.

Dannie, 19, said: "One second I was dancing with my new husband and the next I was giving birth to my little girl."

"Despite weighing only 6lbs 4oz, and arriving almost a month early, Jasmine is doing really well and was the perfect wedding gift."

NEWS IN BRIEF

Free return offer for zoo's visitors

DUDLEY Zoo has relaunched a free return offer for January and February visitors.

Every full paying person who visits during the first few weeks of 2018 will receive a complimentary trip. Zoo director Derek Grove said: "Enjoy a stroll around the zoo's 40-acre site while discovering more about the world's rarest animals. Many of our enclosures have internal viewing areas, where visitors can see the animals even if they're indoors."

To redeem the free return vouchers, valid until July 31, visitors need to provide an original receipt from the January or February visit.

Tax payers have a say over spending

RESIDENTS are urged to have their say about investment in services in Dudley borough.

The deadline is approaching on January 26 for Dudley Council's 'Big Question' budget consultation, available online or via local libraries and leisure centres.

Bosses have put forward savings of £4 million for 2018/19 but also propose investing millions in other services.

Chiefs propose increasing the basic rate of council tax by 1.99 per cent plus a precept of one per cent to support older and vulnerable adults.

Cycling Santas are caught on M5

TWO boozy cyclists were collared by police officers as they made their way down a busy motorway in Santa hats on Christmas Day.

Traffic officers caught up with the cyclists riding along the M5 north-bound between Junctions 6 and 5.

Both cyclists were said to be "rather intoxicated" when they were removed from the carriageway by Central Motorway Police Group officers.

Several intoxicated pedestrians were also removed from the motorway during the festive period.

Neon dash to raise cash for hospital unit

A HOSPITAL charity is appealing for walkers and runners to take part in a colourful fundraiser at Himley Hall.

Dudley Group NHS Charity has organised a Neon 5k Colour Dash to generate funds for its neonatal unit.

Participants can run, skip, walk or dance their way round either a 2.5k or a 5k course. The event is to take place at 11am on June 10 For more information see www.dudleygroup.nhs.uk/our-charity or call (01384) 321121.

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Halesowen Chronicle Thursday, January 4, 2018

The Prodigy,
Wolverhampton Civic Hall

ELECTRO giants The Prodigy put on an incredible show at Wolverhampton with thunderous bass, tremendous energy and a phenomenal lights show.

Despite having been in the industry for 27 years, the Essex band gave a stellar performance packed with hit after infectious hit, barely coming up for air between songs.

The city centre venue was heaving with fans, from young teens to 40-something ravers, many of whom donned fluorescent clothing and glow sticks.

The crowd on the floor was a sea of bodies, each of them jumping and dancing to the array of fan favourites blasted by the band.

With the group playing beneath mesmerising lighting made up of dozens of spotlights, and singing into UV microphones, it was truly a sight to behold.

Songs performed by the band spanned their highly-successful career, from nineties hits Firestarter, Breathe and Smack My B**** Up, through to noughties numbers such as Run With The Wolves.

Keith Palmer, AKA Maxim, was without doubt star of the show. The 50-year-old icon's energy was unwavering throughout, as were his vocals and powerful stage presence.

Though it was hardly needed, Maxim continuously rared up the crowd, demanding shouts and jumps at every turn.

"I can't hear you," he belloved.

"Is this Wolverhampton or what?"

And the audience happily obliged, as they danced for their lives to an array of thumping tunes, such as Omen, Voodoo People, Their Law and Take Me To The Hospital.

A true stand-out moment for the Civic and one of the most thrilling nights out in Wolverhampton I've had in a long time.

KIRSTEN RAWLINS

Fairy Bev delights in a panto 'masterpiece'

The boys are back in town for pop classics

Jersey Boys, New Alexandra Theatre, Birmingham



Magic night – Singer Beverley Knight with Ugly Sisters Ceri Dupree, right, and David Dale



Panto favourite Matt Slack and Suzanne Shaw

THE familiar rags to riches story about a group formed by friends who grow apart is given a 'The Sopranos'-like twist in this all-conquering jukebox musical based on the story of Frankie Valli and the Four Seasons.

When they started in New Jersey in the early '60s the gang of Italian-American neighbourhood pals were more successful at getting criminal records than hit records.

That past was to catch up with them and split the band when they had become one of the most popular groups in America.

That success, based largely on Bob Gaudio's songwriting genius and Valli's helium vocals, was not with the Woodstock generation but with the people who worked on production lines or flipped burgers – people like them.

Filled to the brim with classic Four Seasons songs, from Sherry to Rag Doll, Walk Like A Man to Who Loves You?, this is a show as smart as the quartet's suits and as slick as their synchronised moves.

It also cleverly staged, often switching the perspective to give a back stage view.

The language pulls no punches and the show is fast-paced with lots of humour to balance the drama and tragedy.

Ultimately it depends on the four young men in the spotlight and in this production they are exceptional – Michael Watson is totally believable as the ambitious Valli, delivering that famous falsetto but also able to croon; Simon Bailey is the crooked Tommy Devito; Declan Egan the shy but brilliant Gaudio; and Lewis Griffiths the unassuming Nick Massi.

Their sensational sound prompted a standing – and dancing – ovation from the Birmingham audience.

Jersey Boys continues at the Alex until January 6 and visits Wolverhampton Grand from August 28 to September 6.

LEON BURAKOWSKI

Cinderella, Birmingham Hippodrome

IF you spot a fairytale coach winging its way across the skies over the West Midlands during the next few weeks, you can be sure that it's heading to Birmingham.

The Hippodrome is known for doing it bigger and better than anywhere else and this year is no exception, as Qdos Entertainment deliver on every level, providing stunning scenery, stars, sumptuous costumes and the best special effects in the business, to ensure the venue maintains its place at the top of the panto Christmas tree.

Its stellar cast includes the multi-talented soul diva, radio presenter, musical theatre actress and now one third of newly formed trio, Leading Ladies, Wolverhampton-born and bred, Bever-

REVIEWS

ley Knight; Prince of the Strictly ballroom, the charismatic Danny Mac; and, of course Birmingham's favourite panto comedian, the incomparable Matt Slack, who returns to the city for the fifth year running due to unprecedented demand.

It's two and half hours of laugh out loud comedy, fun and frolics. The staging and choreography are second to none. The adult humour does tip the balance very slightly but is never offensive, while the traditional silliness and cringe-worthy jokes reign supreme.

This is Beverley's first voyage into pantoland

and she certainly is a 'Fabulous Fairy' completely stealing the limelight from the off, as her famous golden tones ring out as she flies high above the audience on a giant butterfly to open the show.

Fairy Godmother Bev takes everything in her stride, including the ad-libs and mischief making of panto royalty, The Grumbleweeds, whose well worn but classic comedy she more than matches, holding her own while they create mayhem.

The beautiful and talented Suzanne Shaw is the perfect Cinders, whilst Ceri Dupree and David Dale are suitably hideous as the Ugly Sisters. Producer/director, Michael Harrison, has created an unmissable panto masterpiece. It runs until January 28

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It's going to cost more to die in Dudley

THE cost of dying is set to rise in Dudley with charges for burials and cremations due to increase in 2018.

Families will have to fork out an extra £78 to bury an adult in Dudley, with the cost to rise above £1,000 if the proposals are rubber-stamped next week.

It would be the second increase to bereavement charges in 12 months.

An adult burial is set to cost £1,053, up from £975. Burying a child would go up from £194 to £209.

The cost of an adult cremation is due to rise by £65 to £877. Cremations for children would go up from £97 to £105.

The burial or cremation of a still-born baby, or a baby aged under one month, will remain free under the plans.

Pressures

Bosses at the Conservative-controlled authority said the proposed hikes are to 'account for inflationary increases and pressures' and had been calculated at a level required 'to meet income targets set as part of the council's budget'.

If the increases go ahead, it means adult burials would cost families £150 more than in 2016.

A final decision on the increases is due to be made at a meeting on January 10.

Body in canal thought to be of missing man

A BODY found in a Black Country canal is believed to be that of missing man Simon Smith, from Brierley Hill.

The body was found in the canal off Meeting Lane at Brierley Hill on the morning of December 27. Mr Smith was last seen on December 3. Police say the death is not being treated as suspicious.

Brain injury saves crash driver from being sent behind bars

Students will dance at Hippodrome



Ready to tread the boards at Birmingham Hippodrome, Halesowen College's successful four dance students

FOUR dancers from Halesowen College will be dancing in productions at Birmingham Hippodrome this year.

Ellie Baker, Megan Alebon, Abbie Sanders and Alarna Parkes will be working with different production teams during the year at one the coun-

try's top theatres. The four students had to pass intense auditions which saw them vie with students from other colleges in the Midlands.

Gemma Sherratt, dance course leader at Halesowen College, said: "We are really proud of our students, they

have worked extremely hard to secure these prestigious positions.

"We are also really pleased to have built up a good connection with the Birmingham Hippodrome to give our students these fantastic opportunities."

LIFE-CHANGING injuries suffered by drink-driver Anthony Evitts in a crash while driving a car taken without permission have saved him from prison.

His brother was thrown through the windscreen and a young woman passenger left close to death when disaster struck in Birmingham Road, Stourbridge, in March.

The vehicle had a suspension fault the 29-year-old knew nothing of when he illegally took the motor, Wolverhampton Crown Court heard. Mr Edward Soulsby, prosecuting, explained that the defendant, who is from Halesowen, lost control of the car on a bend at speed. A sample taken later gave a reading of 94 milligrams of alcohol per 100 millilitres of blood. The legal limit is 80.

The woman passenger's back was broken in four places as well as suffering head injuries, punctures to both lungs, a broken pelvis and facial scarring.

Mr Oliver Woolhouse, defending, said the suspension fault could have been one of the reasons why Evitts lost control.

Shame

The lawyer continued: "He remembers nothing of what happened but lives with the guilt, shame and remorse of knowing he was responsible."

The defendant still has major problems from a brain injury. He now receives disability living allowance and is cared for by his grandmother. Mr Woolhouse said: "It will be a very slow road to recovery, if it ever comes."

Evitts, of Wesley Avenue, pleaded guilty to aggravated vehicle taking causing injury, drink-driving, having no insurance nor a driving licence.

Recorder Abigail Nixon told him: "Without the injuries you suffered you would be going straight to prison and you would no doubt swap a prison sentence for those injuries. You have now got to live with what you have done."

Evitts received a 12-month jail sentence suspended for two years with a three-month night-time curfew and was banned from driving for 12 months.

Games pool 'within year'

WORK on a multi-million pound aquatics centre to host swimming and diving events at the 2022 Commonwealth Games could begin within 12 months.

Sandwell Council leader Steve Eling said progress on the facility, which will be built on an as yet unnamed location in the Smethwick area, would gather pace within weeks after Birmingham was confirmed as the host city.

Following the Games, the aquatics centre will act as the main leisure facility in the south of the borough.

The cost of the facility has not yet been revealed, with funding likely to be available from the Commonwealth Games organisers and other sporting bodies.

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IN MY VIEW

with Mark Andrews



So Ringo what have you done to merit this?

A GREATER mind than mine is needed to work this one out. Back in 1965, when Beatlemania was at its height, Ringo Starr was appointed an MBE, along with the rest of his bandmates.

In 1970, when The Beatles finally broke up having released their final album there were no further honours, presumably because the MBEs were thought to suffice.

Paul McCartney was given a knighthood in 1997, but nothing more for Starr, presumably because the MBE was still considered sufficient. Indeed, there was no mention of him in the Queen's birthday honours, and that was only six months ago. Nor in the previous New Year's honours list or the one for David Cameron's resignation, four months earlier.

So Ringo's honour is obviously for something he has achieved since June last year, something that completely eclipses his work with The Beatles. Perhaps somebody can tell me what it is?

□ □ □

DAVID Beckham reveals that at times of stress, he plays with Lego to help him relax. Which reminds me of a joke dating back to his playing days, when the midfielder asked the then Manchester United boss Alex Ferguson for help with a jigsaw. "Boss, boss, you've gotta help me," he shouted nervously. "I wanted to show Victoria I am not thick, that I can do a jigsaw puzzle, but it's so hard."

Looking slightly confused, Ferguson asked Beckham where the puzzle was.

"It's here boss, it's meant to be a cockerel, but no matter how I arrange all the pieces, it doesn't look right."

Ferguson sighed wearily, and placed a fatherly hand on Beckham's shoulder.

"David, David, son," he said, "Just put the cornflakes back in the box."

□ □ □

EXCITING news from the Government, which is spending millions to ensure all mainline trains have "superfast wi-fi connectivity". Apparently, this means every passenger will be able to watch videos at the same time, which is great news for ticket inspectors who will have to interrupt every passenger from their viewing.

Can you imagine anything more hateful? Whole carriages of people lost in their own little world, a cacophony of whistling noises emanating from the headphones like tinnitus for anybody not wishing to participate. The work involves laying hundreds of miles of fibre-optic cables alongside the tracks, so you can imagine the disruption.

Call me a luddite, but wouldn't you prefer the money was spent on a bit of real "connectivity", like reopening some of the railway lines around the Black Country?

From fake news and Bake Off to the TV licence fee



Donald Trump – if somebody takes a pot-shot will guards shout: "Donald, duck!"



Gary Lineker – takes TV licence fees from more than 15,000 homes to employ him



The Krankies – reader asks: "After Scottish independence, who gets custody of them?"

Annual line-up: So who can Trump this?

ANOTHER year is almost over. My thanks to all readers, especially those of you whose contributions enlivened this column in 2017.

Here's a selection of snippets month-by-month recalling a year of everything from fake news to Bake Off, cold snaps and the TV licence fee.

JANUARY: A reader asks, if somebody takes a pot-shot at President Trump, will the bodyguards shout: "Donald, duck!"

FEBRUARY: The Government says old folk occupying big houses will be "given incentives" to move into smaller properties. A reader asks: "Will the same criteria apply to the stately piles of England: Buckingham Palace, Windsor Castle and Clarence House?" Any more questions like that, my lad, and you'll find yourself in a very large dwelling. The Tower.

MARCH: A reader inquires: "After Scottish independence, who gets custody of the Krankies?"

APRIL: Still on religion, Easter eggs and suchlike, a reader points out that there is no such person as the Archbishop of Cadbury.

MAY: A reader writes: "Historians have revealed that they may have found the location in Suffolk where St Edmund is buried. It is thought to be in the town of Bury St Edmunds. How much do these people earn, and where do I apply for a job?"

JUNE: The unspeakable leader. The official election leaflet has just arrived from our local Labour candidate. It contains not a single mention of Jeremy Corbyn.

THE BEST OF PETER RHODES



JULY: If you haven't done the sums yet, it takes the TV licence fees from more than 15,000 homes to employ Gary Lineker at the BBC for a year.

AUGUST: A close look at the neo-Nazi marchers in Charlottesville reveals the usual snarling, dead-eyed losers you see at any far-right gathering. Whenever you meet the Master Race, it's always a disappointment.

SEPTEMBER: Prue Leith, the Bake Off judge, pins the blame on our "centrally heated houses and sedentary lifestyle" for contributing to obesity. Nothing to do with all those cakes, then?

OCTOBER: Is anyone else surprised that, while the weather forecasters queued up to explain why the sky had turned orange a few days ago, no-one warned us in advance that it was going to happen? Not so much forecasting as afcasting.

NOVEMBER: If Moscow really is planting fake news to bring down the West, expect it to be a well-concealed operation. You know how it is. You open one Russian troll and there's another troll inside.

DECEMBER: Hell's teeth. If this cold weather continues we babyboomers in our huge palaces may be forced to spend our winter fuel allowance on winter fuel. That was never the plan.

So that was the year, that was. And now for some snippets to kick off 2018...

ALL hail the new blue passport, the visible symbol of the UK finally divorced from the EU. In the great scheme of things, the colour of a document that most of us use only once or twice a year may seem insignificant. But such things matter, if only to reassure 17 million voters that HMS Brexit, having been tied to the EU quayside in miles of red tape for the past 18 months, is about to set sail.

CASTLE Lodge in Ludlow is one of the quirkiest old buildings I've ever visited, probably because it is privately owned and occupied and there's a strange sense of intruding into somebody's secret world. So good luck to the £500,000 appeal to acquire and restore it, although I understand the sentiments of a reader who declares: "Food banks in every town – and yet another old building takes precedence!" The point is that if every old-building appeal were wound up tomorrow, the money would still not alleviate poverty. Now that we have hundreds of them, food banks, like the poor, will always be with us. As long as some people are happy to collect and distribute food to the less well-off and other people are grateful to accept it, the food banks will endure. It is pointless and insulting to regard them as a national disgrace.

A CROSS-party group of MPs says travellers who set up illegal camps should be forced to pay for the cost of cleaning up any mess they leave behind. Good luck with that. I have a mental image of a determined and stern-faced MP handing a bill to one such family and inexplicably ending up with an even bigger bill for 50 yards of asphalt he never wanted.

TALKING POINT



What's this obsession with TV and smuggling?

FOR some reason the subject of smuggling has suddenly become a hot topic and not just in the stories which make the news these days. Take a recent week-end's TV schedules for example.

First we had Sir Tony "Time Team" Robinson in Cornwall with his Walking Through History, and he was determined to dig up all the facts he could on smuggling there.

It was an interesting insight into a precarious but lucrative industry, but blow me down, who was this in hot pursuit of the Time Team man? Only one of the West Midlands' finest. Coastal Railways with Julie Walters was an affectionate trip along scenic routes. And aside from wallowing in the Cornish scenery, she was equally happy poking about for clues to how smugglers operated.

Then just as we thought there was nothing more to be said about the subject, up pops the least likely of smuggling fans in Penelope Keith's Coastal Villages. In an attempt to outrun Robinson and Walters, she headed for the Isle of Wight and West Sussex where, to quote Channel 4, she "becomes immersed in stories of seafarers, smugglers and shipwrecks".

Despite the lawlessness of the subject, all three programmes portrayed those ruthless gangs of long ago in a romantic light. And there is something to be said about the thrill of sneaking past the authorities. I was nervous as hell when smuggling my cassette recorder into open-air festivals to obtain what I reckoned would be highly sought-after bootleg tapes of the likes of Pink Floyd and Thin Lizzy.

Only trouble was, my primitive machine made the bands sound like they were playing in a tunnel, and picked up every utterance of the people around me.

Years later, having come straight from work, I had more success taking a tuna sandwich into a football match, despite warning notices at the turnstiles saying only food and drink bought at the kiosks could be consumed inside the stadium.

Of course, there is a very serious side to smuggling, as in the court case where several people were jailed for using drones to get drugs and phones to prison inmates. But sometimes you have to smile at the audacity of some people. I was once in a cinema, waiting for the film to start, when a couple extracted from a carrier bag a flask, sandwiches and for all I know a dessert, and had a real feast. And what had I brought with me? A bottle of tap water from home, just to avoid paying the exorbitant prices in the foyer.

Sometimes, it's best just to be brazen... and prepare a convincing excuse for when you're nabbed! STEVE PARLETT

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In praise of these 'special' individuals

TWO of the highlights of my work on the run up to Christmas was working with very special groups of individuals. Generations apart both groups fall into the special needs area (although whatever they appear to lack they make up for in unbelievable enthusiasm).

Halas homes in Halesowen run a day centre as part of the complex and I have been working with the staff and a group of individuals on their festive play while also accompanying them with their amazing sing and sign lady to Brummigum Town Hall for a morning of carols.

If no one has ever seen sing and sign being performed I advise you to, it has so much life and expression it was a joy to be part of both and I look forward to working with the group again in 2018.

Sutton School in Dudley supports teenagers with learning difficulties and other issues.

After a visit, by teachers and pupils to my radio show I went to the school and was completely gripped by the pupils and the work they performed, one particular young lad played me his original song.

I told the head and his teacher that

it needed to be recorded and it would be played on my Omma n Chain show and I would invite teachers and pupils down on the show in the New Year.

It was a real highlight of a year for me to be involved with the individuals and staff of both groups.

I have promised to organise shows to help fund some new guitars for the school and no doubt will work with Halas through the year.

DR BRIAN DAKIN
(AKA BILLY SPAKE MON)
Dudley

Answers needed on green belt

YOUR front page article (Dec 21) announces that Mayor Andy Street 'backs green belt plea'. However, all the mayor has committed himself to, from the attributed quote, is "I very much hope... no 'exceptional circumstance' condition will be met".

He refers to the Black Country Core Strategy. This contains a section reviewing the role and extent of the green belt. This makes it plain that the critical aspect of all this is the Review of the Core Strategy, which is referenced by Cllr Harley who 'could not promise open land would not be built on'.

I have previously asked for our MP, the mayor and Cllr Harley to attend a consultation meeting in Halesowen and answer questions on the green belt.

Mick Freer's comments that he hopes "their (Messrs Street and Morris) lead will encourage other politicians to follow suit" needs to be put to a rather stiffer test.

JOHN PAYNE
Halesowen

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

POST

Dudley Chronicle,
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Letters should be brief and MUST include name, address and telephone number. The Editor reserves the right to condense letters.

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story, write to The Editor, Chronicles, 51-53 Queen Street, Wolverhampton, WV1 1ES

Lead on! Dog tired of the bad owners

WALKING my dogs I met someone walking two large dogs off the lead in the street. As I knew one could be aggressive I asked the owner to put them on the lead, but got a load of abuse. The next day on Sheepwash Nature Reserve a man walking two pit bull type dogs had them off the lead, and when asked to put them on a lead, refused and walked off.

It seems not much will be done unless they attack. I don't give my small dogs much chance if bitten by dogs weighing around 80lbs plus, especially as one of my dogs is diabetic and almost blind.

It's no wonder why we have all the laws surrounding dogs, when owners like this just ignore them!

MRS ADAMS
Dudley

Please obey junction box rules

JUST got back from shopping at Asda in Pearson St, Brierley Hill.

I would have been a lot quicker and a lot less stressed if road users understood or obeyed the rule of the criss-crossed boxes at junctions.

As I approached the lights at the junction of Venture Way and Mill Street the lights were on green but because cars had pulled into the box I couldn't go anywhere.

The lights changed back to red for me and traffic moved but when they had changed back to green a bus had come along and pulled up at the bus stop just round the corner.

All the traffic coming up from Merry Hill followed it, so again I was unable to move. I finally moved at the third green light.

The rule is if you cannot exit the box immediately on the other side do not enter it.

JENNY JAMES
Wordsley

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Keep fit thanks to a pole dancing champion



Robyn Churchill, 17, of Stourbridge, left, and Jade Flash, 25, of Quinton, are opening The Jewels Academy in Dudley

IT is a fitness lesson – with a difference.

Pole dancing and aerial exercise is coming to Dudley.

The Jewels Academy will be opening at a former industrial unit in Angel Street and it is being co-led by World Pole Double Champion Jade Flash.

Mrs Flash, aged 25, says the academy will offer people looking to get fit with 'an alternative, fun way' to shed the pounds.

The academy will feature aerial

equipment, competition-height poles and a dance studio. It is scheduled to open on Saturday (January 6).

Mrs Flash, who will be running the academy alongside 17-year-old Robyn Churchill, said: "Many people find it hard to motivate themselves at a gym but this is an alternative, fun way for people to improve their fitness."

Mrs Flash, from Quinton, has danced since the age of three. She did a three-year performing art course at Stratford-upon-Avon College before starting work on musicals.

Her dancing career has taken her overseas, including Mexico, and she even joined the circus on returning to the UK, becoming an aerial artist with the Charles Chipperfield Circus.

After working as a fitness instructor, and competing, she decided to open the new academy in the Black Country.

She said: "Because I live in Halesowen I decided to look for a unit nearby, and as soon as I saw the place I knew it was right."

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WOLVERHAMPTON
MAGAZINE

Gas showroom goes to museum



The demolished gas showroom site off High Street in West Bromwich which will take its place at the museum



A picture of the building from years gone by



The building seen in its latter years, cordoned off

IT stood on the High Street for three quarters of a century but the famous West Bromwich Gas Showroom has now vanished from view.

But it won't be long before the landmark building reappears – five miles away at the Black Country Living Museum.

The old showroom, which became run-down having been derelict for years, has been knocked down, altering the look of the High Street, with sections to be brought back to life at the famous attraction.

Museum bosses were keen to get their hands on the building to add to its impressive list of iconic buildings from years gone by. The showroom dates back to the 1940s and was a prominent feature of the town centre.

Council chiefs in Sandwell also wanted rid of the old showroom, which they feared could pose a danger due to its crumbling state, and will now look to develop that part of the High Street.

The Gas Showroom is expected to form part of the museum's new 1940s and 60s town, which will be created over the next five years as part of a multi-million pound expansion at the attraction.

The ambitious plans to expand the museum on Tipton

Road in Dudley have moved forward with the submission of a planning application.

The museum is seeking to install buildings, structures, a tramway extension and an access road as part of the project to have a new period of history that visitors can enjoy.

Dudley Council has received the planning application and it will now go before bosses who will make a decision.

The move was welcomed by ward councillor Alan Finch, who said: "I welcome this 100 per cent.

"It is a fantastic project. The Black Country Living Museum is the hub of Dudley, so anything that will improve it is much welcomed."

Meanwhile, a 100-year-old tram that was once used as a garden shed is back on the tracks at the museum.

Tram 5 is now operating at the attraction after a £75,000 overhaul. The single-decker tram was built in 1920 at the works of the Electric Traction Company in Tividale and operated in Dudley borough. Thirty-one trams of the same design were constructed at the works and Tram 5 is one of the few that survived.

In the 1970s, it was discovered in a garden in Kates Hill, where it was used as a shed and garden house. Tram 5 underwent conservation work at Llangollen Railway.

Mia enjoys her moment in spotlight



Mia Richards, from Lower Gornal, takes centre stage with former MP Ann Widdecombe

THEATRE star Mia Richards has been riding high on her magic carpet after landing a first professional role in the pantomime Aladdin.

The Black Country actress played Princess Jasmine alongside a cast that also included former Conservative MP Ann Widdecombe at Marina Theatre in Lowestoft.

The panto finished on New Year's Day after a 32-performance run and received rave reviews. Mia, aged 20, from Lower Gornal, relished her starring role. Her proud father

Mark said: "We did a 400 mile round trip with family and friends to see the panto. It was great to see Mia doing what she loves and the show was fabulous."

After leaving Ellowes Hall Sports College, Mia went on to audition and study for a BTEC Level 3 Extended Diploma in Performing Arts at Birmingham Ormiston Academy.

She also studied at Andrew Lloyd Webber's Arts Educational School in London for a year before securing a place at PPA in Guildford where she is beginning her second year.

Games success could hasten the Metro link

THE £200 million extension of the Midland Metro through Dudley town centre to Brierley Hill could be ready a year earlier than expected in time for the Commonwealth Games in 2022.

Transport bosses revealed they wanted to speed up work on the line, which will be extended from Wednesbury towards Dudley, to take advantage of the sporting competition being held in Birmingham.

Work was due to start in 2019 and the line open to passengers by 2023 but the launch date could now be brought forward.

Discussions have already been held about speeding up the work and further talks are now planned with Transport for West Midlands and the Midlands Metro Alliance.

Dudley Council leader Patrick Harley said: "The announcement that Birmingham is to host the 2022 Commonwealth Games is fantastic news for the whole region. With thousands of extra visitors potentially coming into the region, we recognise that the Games could prove a massive economic boost for Dudley."

The seven-mile route will run past Dudley Zoo and Castle, into the heart of Dudley town centre and then on to the Waterfront, Merry Hill and into Brierley Hill town centre.

Shopkeeper is fined after illegal tobacco haul found

A HAUL of illegal cigarettes and tobacco was discovered hidden in a secret compartment in a chair when trading standards officers visited a shop in Dudley.

The team, which included a sniffer dog, carried out an inspection at Alena Mini Market in Dudley High Street.

Wolverhampton Magistrates' Court was told that in October 2016 officers discovered 63 packets of cigarettes and tobacco at the shop which did not have the necessary health warnings and evaded excise duty.

Four of the brands were found to be counterfeit.

The duty evaded was estimated to be more than £400.

As well as finding packets hidden in

a chair, some of the haul was discovered by the inspection team inside a jacket.

Khosnaw Fayiqi, aged 27, the proprietor of Alena Mini Market pleaded guilty to five offences at Wolverhampton Magistrates Court.

He was fined £500 and ordered to pay £500 costs and a victim surcharge of £30. All the illegal products seized were ordered to be destroyed.

Dates revealed for community forums

COMMUNITY forums will be taking place in venues across the Dudley borough this month.

The next round of the Dudley Council-run meetings will be held from January 8 to 22. People can meet with councillors and police representatives to discuss and work together on ideas or issues in their community.

Forums also offer community groups the chance to bid for grants of up to £5,000 for projects or activities which benefit local people.

Council leader Patrick Harley said: "With the start of a new year, it's a great time to get together with local communities to focus on our key priorities for the year ahead."

For a list of forums visit dudley.gov.uk/community

Road victim is named by police



Krzysztof Klasowski – found dying in the street

THE man killed in a suspected hit-and-run incident in Stourbridge last month has been named by police.

Krzysztof Klasowski died after being hit by a vehicle on Ambleside High Street, Stourbridge. The 37-year-old, from West Bromwich, was found in the road with multiple injuries at around 5.30am on December 16.

Police continue to appeal for any information surrounding Mr Klasowski's death.

A 20-year-old man was arrested on suspicion of causing death by dangerous driving after handing himself in to a police station. He has since been released as the investigation continues.

Sergeant Alan Wood, from West Midlands Police, said: "A number of people have spoken to me and my team but I am appealing to anyone who has not yet come forward and who was in the area at around 3.30pm to contact me."

Anyone with information is asked to email the Collision Investigation Unit at fi_collision_invest@west-midlands.pnn.police.uk.

Firms finally start to see benefit of fund

THE first companies are benefitting from a major cash injection for industry from the Midlands Engine Investment Fund (MEIF).

Brierley Hill-based Direct Digital Controls is one of four companies to secure funding. It will enable the 21-strong company to recruit four more staff and train an additional apprentice as it expands its growing wired and lighting controls divisions.

The finance was due to be launched at the start of 2017, alongside a similar scheme for the Northern Powerhouse area. But a string of delays held up the funding. It was finally cleared to start lending in October.

Backed by the European Regional Development Fund, MEIF will provide £120 million of debt finance and small business loan funds as part of a £250m commitment to support the growth of small and medium-sized companies across the Midlands.

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'Unscrupulous' former head given teaching ban

A HEADTEACHER who 'tricked' a colleague into bumping up his salary by £19,000 has been banned from teaching for life.

David Bishop-Rowe, former head at The Sutton School and Specialist College in Dudley, took advantage of a colleague's poor eyesight to get his pay rise signed off.

The increase, which had not been approved by the school's governing body, took his salary up to £110,851.

The 61-year-old was also found to have committed a 'sustained course of dishonest conduct', including directing thousands of pounds owed to the school to a company set up by himself. He has apologised for his 'unscrupulousness'.

Resigned

Mr Bishop-Rowe led the school in Scotts Green Close, for pupils with special educational needs, from 2002 until he resigned in 2014 after a whistleblower triggered an investigation.

He has been banned from the profession by the National College for Teaching and Leadership, part of the Department for Education, after admitting a string of allegations.

The panel found Mr Bishop-Rowe had 'deliberately sought to conceal' the fact that he had set up a private company, Education Development Consultancy (EDC), where money that should have gone to the school was instead funnelled.

It said that almost £28,000 the school should have received for work he did for the National College for School Leadership (NCSL) was instead redirected to EDC after he added the company's bank details to invoices without the knowledge of the school,



Former headteacher David Bishop-Rowe has been banned from the profession

or the NCSL. Further investigation found that Mr Bishop-Rowe was named as a director, meaning 'payments made to EDC were being paid in effect directly to Mr Bishop-Rowe'.

The former head, who was runner-up in the education category at the Dudley Civic Awards in 2006, was also paid as an associate at the University of Wolverhampton when he had not been given permission to carry out private work.

And the panel also heard how he managed to orchestrate a 21 per cent pay rise by getting a colleague with poor eyesight to sign it off.

Mr Bishop-Rowe claimed he believed NCSL and EDC had a separate contract to the school, while he insisted his pay rise was for 'additional responsibilities'.

Mr Bishop-Rowe was not at the hearing but admitted the allegations against him, and was banned from teaching indefinitely.

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ATTRACTIVE, bubbly, confident and with a contagious laugh – there are simply not enough descriptive words to capture in a single sentence the experience of meeting professional chef, **Jacky Standish**.

Looking younger than her 57 years, Jacky has engaged on an unusual "bucket list", though she's quick to point out: "I'm definitely not dying. Quite the opposite!"

For the dog-lover, who confesses "she doesn't know who to smile at first," the list all about making up for lost time.

It's hard to imagine, this woman who laughs easily and is generous with her smiles, would ever want for anything, but reflecting on recent years she admits "there's plenty of catching up to be done."

Relaxing over a coffee, the former chef and house manager to Hagley Hall's Lord and Lady Cobham, explains that enduring decades of teeth troubles left her battling with some very dark days before receiving

implant treatment at North Street Dental and Implant Clinic in Dudley.

"I was deeply ashamed of my teeth. I could cook fabulous meals for the rich and famous who regularly visited the hall. But for my own pleasure with food, it was becoming a nightmare as I found it more and more difficult to eat the meals I prepared."

"My bucket list . . . all the places I want to eat out," she muses, "and I just might cook at home and throw a dinner party . . . that sounds terribly old fashioned, doesn't it," she adds.

"I always used to find meals out with family and friends quite daunting and felt my presence compromised those with whom I was out. Of course, they'd have to find a restaurant with a menu offering something I could chew," Jacky says.

Jacky, suffered with periodontal (gum) disease for decades. "I was informed by my family dentist I would experience dental issues throughout my life."

"At one point I was attending the den-

Can't stop smiling!

How chef to rich and famous found 'ingredients' for a new life



visit www.denture-clinic.co.uk and follow the link to view Jacky's 'reveal' videos

A transformed Jacqueline showing off her beautifully crafted new smile with her pre-treatment look inset

tists every three months to try and control the problems, but no matter how I tried, as the years passed I lost more and more teeth," she recalls.

Jacky's confidence plummeted so badly she would walk her dog at 5am to avoid meeting people. "By my mid-50s the erosion on my confidence was as severe as the erosion on my gums," she says.

Now, with four implants retaining an upper overdenture and a partial lower traditional prosthetic, she's thrilled with her

new smile. "No-one would ever know they are not my natural teeth. Out with my dog, I can now speak to people and ask 'what sort of dog have you got on your lead?'"

Now look at me!

Jacky, who recently renovated her newly-purchased bungalow, adds: "Everything was finished except a makeover of the front garden. I could have paid to have it done, but decided to invest in my teeth. It was no good having a front garden when

you have no front teeth." The surgery was carried out by North Street's implant dentist Owain Rees BDS DGDGP (UK) Dip Imp Dent (UCL) GDC 61576.

Summing up her experience Jacky concluded: "I wake up feeling remarkably good, my jaw sore from all the smiling. I came for an initial consultation with Steven [practice principal Steven Burchell Dip CDT RCS Eng GDC 108353] and I could hardly lift my head up."

"Now look at me!"



Heritage and history brought to life



Pupils from Ileys Community Centre who took part in the project to learn about traditional skills

YOUNGSTERS from Smethwick took part in an innovative project to show them how traditional skills such as forging and chain making are being updated by new technology.

The project, a collaboration between the Black Country Living Museum and Dudley College, intended to give the children an appreciation of the Black Country's industrial past while introducing them to future career options.

More than 20 children from the age of eight, who attend the Ileys Community Centre, learned about chain-making and welding skills by visiting Dudley College's Advance II centre to see modern technology in action.

Dudley College principal Lowell Williams said: "Their enthusiasm was unsurpassed and they clearly understood the links between past craft skills and how the same products are being made today by advanced technology."

£1.6m for hospital charities

TWO hospital charities have received more than £1.6 million through fundraising, donations and legacies in 12 months.

The money has been used for a variety of projects in Sandwell and Dudley.

The Dudley Group NHS Charity received £246,257 in donations and £17,935 in legacies during the 2016/17 financial year. Fundraising also helped to add £79,314 to the pot. Chief execu-

tive Diane Wake said: "We are always overwhelmed by the generosity of those who support our charity in the form of donations, legacies and taking part in fundraising."

"The charitable donations we receive allow us to provide extra comfort, equipment and facilities that otherwise would not be available."

She said donations had been used to buy specialist equipment as well as introducing new digital reminiscence therapy software to areas across Russells Hall Hospital, for the benefit of dementia patients. Meanwhile, the

registered charity for Sandwell and West Birmingham Hospitals - Your Trust Charity - raised £1,246,000 from April 2016 to March 2017.

Projects funded included The Sapphire Project, which was carried out with Agewell CIC and West Bromwich African Caribbean Care Centre.

Johnny Shah, head of Your Trust Charity, said: "We are so grateful to the fantastic generosity of our donors, with legacies in particular helping us to fund 13 new projects of almost £400,000 from our grants programme."

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Simple steps homeowners can take now to protect their assets

Head of April King Legal Paul King explains why some homeowners are doing too little, too late to protect their hard-earned assets.



Paul King, Head of April King Legal

1. Care Cost Fees

A lot of people are still unaware that if they need care in later life, their assets will be means-tested by the local authority to help pay for these services. This goes back to the Community Care Act 1990, which came into force in 1993. If someone requires social care in later life, the local authority will look to use the assets of a person until they get down to a lower limit of £14,250, when the local authority will take over the fees.

Paul knows this all too well, after experiencing this personally. "My own grandmother sadly passed away recently at the age of 92. My grandfather had died many years earlier and left everything to her.

When she needed care in the last six years of her life, because my grandfather had left everything to her, the house and all the estate were counted in the local authority's means test.

Our clients tell us, 'We've worked hard all our lives, why should the local authority get it all?'

Just as she died, she had gone down to that lower limit of £14,250 – and that's all that her children inherited."

There are many myths about the steps people can take to protect their assets from being used like this. The main one is that a parent should simply sign their house over to the children now, so it won't be taken into consideration for means testing. That's just not true.

Local authorities will actually look to see if you've 'deliberately deprived' yourself of an asset by giving yourself away, going back over any period in time.

Sometimes people think if the gift is made seven years prior then the house is safe.

This is not so as the seven-year rule only applies to Inheritance Tax and not local authority care.

The solution is for couples to simply not leave everything to each other in the first place.

Paul continues: "What my grandfather could have done is leave his half of the house in trust to his children, stating that they couldn't have it while his wife, my grandmother, was still alive. We call these Property Trust Wills.

If my grandfather had left his half of the house in trust to the children then when my grandmother subsequently received care in her later life she would have only been means tested on her own half of the house, but my grandfather's half would have been safe.

Why should he have to contribute his half when he didn't receive any care?

The important factor is that couples need to act in advance. Once one party dies or loses mental capacity, through a stroke for example, they are no longer in a position to do this legitimate and straightforward type of planning.

It is therefore important for couples to act now even if they may not foresee care fees being an issue."

Paul goes on to explain a further important point. Most clients he sees are surprised to learn that remarriage usually cancels a will and makes the new spouse next in line to inherit, ahead of their own children!

Protecting your half of the house in this way, he suggests, ensures that your children ultimately inherit when the survivor dies.

"Had my grandmother remarried after the death of my grandfather the whole estate could have passed sideways out of the family," says Paul.

It's another important reason for home-owning couples to upgrade to a Property Trust Will.

2. Bloodline Trust Wills

The majority of April King's clients have already made standard "mirror wills" with other firms before approaching the firm. A mirror will is when a couple leave everything to each other on the first death, then to the children when the second partner dies. But modern family life means these type of wills leave a lot to chance.

Explains Paul: "If I have a mirror will leaving everything to my wife and she remarries or goes into care after my death then either the new husband or the local authority are likely to inherit most, if not all, of my estate ahead of my children.

Even if my children are named in my mirror will it is by no means certain that they will inherit anything.

Once again, this is because a remarriage would cancel the will my wife had previously made with me and make the new husband next-of-kin. This often comes as a big shock to my clients who had perhaps thought that all was in order and that the family bloodline would one day inherit.

The same is true for thinking that their children and/or grandchildren will one day benefit under a mirror will. If any of your children should die leaving everything to their husband or wife and that son-in-law or daughter-in-law should then remarry, then your grandchildren would be the ones to lose out under the line of inheritance.

Worse still, someone else's grandchildren would be in line to receive the benefit of all your years of hard work!

I've experienced this in my own family and I'm sure most people have had similar experiences or heard of someone who has. Bloodline trusts will give greater protection to your children."

Paul continues: "These things can be avoided by having a bloodline trusts will. Under these types of wills your children have complete control

and access to the inheritance they receive from you but give added protection from the twists and turns of modern family life. The wording in these wills states that any money left over on their demise must pass to any children born of them – your grandchildren."

3. Lasting Power of Attorney

Paul explains how people often get confused thinking that, because they have made a will, their executors can also deal with assets if there is illness, stroke or some other form of incapacity while they are still alive.

"Everyone should actually have two documents – a will that deals with their estate on death, and a lasting power of attorney that deals with their estate during their lifetime," he says.

The lasting power of attorney is a relatively new introduction and is divided into two parts – one deals with finance, the other deals with health and welfare. In many ways it's similar to a passport; a document that's registered now and one which can be physically handed to the attorneys should the need arise. It allows the attorneys, perhaps the children, to deal with banks and pension companies etc should their parent become incapacitated, but also to deal with matters such as where the parent should be living and how they receive care. Your attorneys, again perhaps your children, must legally act in your best interests at all times. You can choose a number of attorneys to act, either jointly or independently, and April King advises on the various options available.

Couples are often surprised to discover that even joint bank accounts can be frozen until the bank sees sight of a lasting power of attorney document

Having a lasting power of attorney removes the burden on children should ill-health happen further down the line. It helps a family deal with bank accounts and so on during a parent's lifetime and ceases on death. Crucially, you have to complete a lasting power of attorney while they are still in good mental health.

If someone becomes ill through say, a stroke or dementia, this option is lost and the family would have to apply for an order from the Court of Protection – a drawn out and expensive process. It is therefore a good idea for clients to plan ahead and remove any future burden from the family.

Once again, all adults should be thinking of this, particularly where there are children or a business involved. It's not just something to think about when you get older, that's the challenge for us.

People think 'I'm not ill, why do I need to make a power of attorney?'

But they're missing the point. This is a document that has to be done in advance. Paul adds: "The next part is to appoint the attorneys, your children. Don't forget, your children can be the executors of your will and attorneys as well. The lasting power of attorney remains in place until you die unless you want to cancel it. Once it's registered, you don't have to worry if you then develop some debilitating illness. A burden has been removed from the family at an already difficult time."



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Hatherton Lodge, Cradley, former home of Noah Hingley

Setback for campaign to save industrialist's former home

A CAMPAIGN to save the former home of the man credited with bringing chainmaking to the Black Country looks to have been lost.

Dudley Council planners have recommended the home in Cradley, once owned by industrialist Noah Hingley, be demolished. The bid will be decided at a planning committee meeting next week.

The Victorian Society and Save Britain's Heritage have pleaded with Dudley Council not to allow

By Richard Guttridge

the demolition of Hatherton Lodge. The property is in a poor condition. and developer Cornbow Properties wants to build seven homes on the site.

Mr Hingley, whose Netherton ironworks N Hingley & Sons made the anchor for the ill-fated liner The Titanic, lived at the property on Drews Holloway during the 19th century. A campaign to save

the Victorian house was launched by heritage campaigners. Nearly 100 objections were lodged and more than 250 backed an online campaign to save the building.

Convincing

The planning committee meeting is being held next Tuesday (January 9). Officers said the applicant had provided 'clear and convincing justification for the loss of Hatherton Lodge'.

Arrest is made after 15 stabbing victim dies

A MAN has been arrested on suspicion of murder after a stabbing victim was declared dead in the first few minutes of 2018.

West Mercia Police said a woman who had suffered what is believed to be a knife injury was pronounced dead at an address in Bromsgrove at 12.12am - 20 minutes after police were called to the property.

A 49-year-old local man was arrested at the scene in Cloverdale, in the Stoke Prior area.

The woman's next of kin has been informed of her death, a police spokesman said.

Neighbours said five police vehicles and an ambulance pulled up outside the semi-detached property as fireworks were let off in surrounding streets to mark the new year.

Anyone with information should call 101 or Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555 111.

Evil killer's prison term is increased after appeal

By Clare Butler

POLICE have praised the extension of the jail sentence of murderer Aaron Barley who killed a mother and son in their own home in Stourbridge.

Barley was sentenced to life in prison in October with a minimum term of 30 years after admitting to murdering mother and son, Tracey and Pierce Wilkinson, at their home in Greyhound Lane last March.

He also admitted the attempted murder of Peter Wilkinson, Tracey's husband and Pierce's father.

After West Midlands Police and the Crown Prosecution Service appealed the sentence, it was ruled that the term was too lenient.

At the Court of Appeal Barley's term was increased after Solicitor General Robert Buckland argued before Lord Justice Holroyde, Mrs Justice Whipple and Mr Justice Goose that the original sentence was 'unduly lenient'.

Insufficient

The three judges agreed that the 30-year minimum term was insufficient in 'this most exceptional and grave case'.

They substituted it with a minimum term of 35 years, less time on remand - amounting to 34 years and 178 days before he can be considered for release on licence. It means Barley will be at least 58 before he is eligible to apply for parole.

Mr Wilkinson and his daughter Lydia were in court in London while Barley watched from prison by video-link.

Barley had armed himself with a kitchen knife when he crept inside the family's home and stabbed Mrs Wilkinson and her son as they slept in their beds. Mr Wilkinson, who was out walking the dog, was stabbed a number of times on his return and was fortunate to survive. Lydia was away at university at the time.

Barley had been taken in by the family after Mrs Wilkinson saw him sleeping rough in the spring of 2016. They had helped him to find a home and a job and had invited him to spend Christmas Day with them.

Detective Chief Inspector Edward Foster, from the homicide team, was at court for the hearing. He said: "I am pleased that the original sentence was deemed too lenient and I hope this brings further closure to Peter Wilkinson and his daughter Lydia."

The trial judge had decided not to impose a whole-life tariff principally because of Barley's youth.

Zoo to spend £460,000 on restoration projects

Plans to spend £460,000 on eight projects have been revealed at Dudley Zoo. The schemes to get under way this year even include a beach.

The innovations include a revamp of the tiger enclosure, a new lion viewing area and a farmyard play area, all set to be completed in 2018.

Dudley Zoo's chief executive Derek Grove says is part of an on-going programme of investment at the Castle Hill attraction.

Visitors who add the 10 per cent voluntary donation to their entrance fee have been given the chance to vote for one of three major projects. Currently, the £250,000 project to extend the Sumatran tiger enclosure is the leading option. A beach is also planned for the summer.

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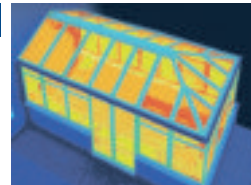
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Here's conclusive proof that the heat from this conservatory is evaporating through the roof - at an alarming rate.

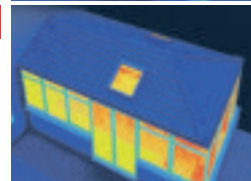
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The simple life for Scott's new sound

Wolverhampton's Ivor Novello Award-winning singer Scott Matthews is planning a busy 2018 with the release of his new album, *The Great Untold*.

The singer/songwriter plans to release the record in April with a tour following in May. It will include a date at Birmingham's St Paul's Church on May 20.

The record is Scott's simplest to date. For the first time in his five-album career, there's no band, no lavish production – just Scott. It is a man, a guitar and a song. It sounds simple, doesn't it? And it is.

Scott's new record, *The Great Untold*, is a career-defining masterpiece. The sixth studio album by the Ivor Novello Award-winning singer-songwriter is the one that many have craved: it is a masterpiece in honesty, instinct and reflection.

A largely acoustic recording, Scott's sublime new record features sparse production. Recorded at home and in acoustically-resonant rural churches, instrumentation has been jettisoned. His 10-song cycle is the sound of a man comfortable in his own skin, putting his neck on the line with a collection of otherworldly songs.

"I'm still working on it but it's coming together and the songs are there. The record will be out in spring. I've always wanted to record a sparse, stripped back record and finally the time felt right to do that."

The ghosts of Paul Simon, Tim Buckley, Nick Drake and John Martyn loom large on a collection that ranks alongside work by some of the world's great singer-songwriters. On his sixth record, Scott has created songs that are breathtaking in their beauty and audacious in their simplicity.

The absence of drums, bass, cello and flute on *The Great Untold*, however, should not infer that it lacks depth. Far from it. The richness in Scott's new work comes from subtle playing and mellifluous melodies. He has improved again. He has become a master of his craft; a man who can play like Bert Jansch, sing like an angel and write songs that Joni Mitchell might admire.

REFINED

In many ways, *The Great Untold* is the start of a new era for Scott. Since his debut album, *Passing Stranger*, in 2006, the Wolverhampton-born star of bluesy acoustica has refined his craft. Writing deft and sensitive songs during a trajectory that begin with the ethereal *Elusive*, *The Great Untold* marks a new beginning.

The first great arc of his career was completed with his *Home* duology; a stunning pair of records that reflected on his journey thus far. *The Great Untold* is the sound of a man moving on. Scott is recently married, soon-to-experience fatherhood and has new hopes and fears, new stories to tell. "After *Home Part 2* was finished, I was looking to move forward by marrying harmony with my experiences since the last record. The plan to write an acoustic record has always been there. I take a while over the songs. But in recent years, I've been keen to release more records. So I'm setting myself deadlines and working more quickly. Robert Plant once told me I ought to do more – and I took his advice."

Scott has been fine-tuning his sixth studio album



Scott has tested himself as a songwriter. The absence of a band means he is vulnerable and exposed. But, in many ways, it was ever thus. He started as a soloist and is ready to fly alone. It opens new possibilities, a different type of challenge. "It takes me out of my comfort zone and has made me test myself. I've pared it down to guitar and vocals. At the beginning, there was nobody else. It's time to surprise myself. It's time to go back to my own world. I've gone full circle.

"This is how it all began. I would write at home, in Wolverhampton, and I'm doing that again now."

Lyricaly, *The Great Untold* is a work with poetic intent. "It's a collection of songs that lots of people will relate to. It's a real mood-shift of a record. The songs always start from a personal angle, but listeners will hear them in different ways. When I'm writing, I'm almost hearing voices from The Masters and thinking: 'Would they approve?'" The point is to make a connection. "I want to move somebody with the power of moods and music. It's very powerful stuff."

It is in the right hands. And that's an apposite description for

It's a collection of songs that lots of people will relate to

The Great Untold. It is a record written by a man at the peak of his powers, by a musician able to channel great beauty in songs that reveal the most human of truths.

Scott remains proud of his Black Country heritage and *The Great Untold* is a record rooted in the region. He has a home studio in his back garden – he calls it the Shedio – and that's where he disappears with his thoughts.

"Things have changed a lot. Back in the day there was the big record label, the management deal and all sorts of people around us. These days it's just my wife and I: we make the decisions, I write the songs, we take it on the road. I kind of like doing things that way. It gives us more artistic control. It's been a steep learning curve but there's a lot to be said for keeping things simple."

Keeping things simple is precisely what *The Great Untold* does. And with his demos for the record now complete, it's shaping up to be the greatest record of his career.

ANDY RICHARDSON

● Scott Matthews is running a Pledge campaign for people who want to pre-order copies of the record and further details are available at www.scottmatthews.uk

● For more entertainment news and reviews see The Ticket in your Express & Star every Friday.

Shrek The Musical



Ogre-awed – Alexandra has dazzling new season

A HOST of exciting productions are set to grace the stage of the New Alexandra Theatre in Birmingham after the venue revealed its dazzling new season.

Shrek The Musical, Strangers On A Train and the astounding Cirque Berserk are just some of the hit shows lined up at the Station Street theatre. Plus, the UK premiere of Sting's Geordie musical The Last Ship and war drama Sebastian Faulks' Birdsong.

It all kicks off next week with The Sound of Music. The Voice finalist Lucy O'Byrne returns in the role of Maria, opposite EastEnders star Neil McDermott as Captain Von Trapp. The Rodgers and Hammerstein show has an unforgettable score featuring Edelweiss, My Favorite Things, Do-Re-Mi, Climb Ev'ry Mountain, and, of course, the title song. Bill Kenwright's production is staged from January 16 to 20.

Strangers on a Train, January 29 to February 3, is a thriller about a murder swap, made into a classic movie by Alfred Hitchcock. It features Christopher Harper

(from Coronation Street) John Middleton (Emmerdale) and Hannah Tointon (Mr Selfridge).

Based on the story and characters from the Oscar-winning Dreamworks animation, Shrek The Musical bursts onto the stage from February 14 to 25.

Cirque Berserk features the world's most hair-raising circus act – the motorcycle Globe Of Death. At the theatre from March 14 to 18.

Andrew 'Freddie' Flintoff makes his stage debut in Kay Mellor's Fat Friends, alongside Jodie Prenger, Sam Bailey and Kevin Kennedy from April 3 to 7.

The UK premiere of Sting's personal, political and passionate musical The Last Ship is an epic tale of community and defiance starring Jimmy Nail from April 16 to 21.

Legally Blonde The Musical features Eastenders star Rita Simons and Eurovision hopeful Lucie Jones from May 21 to 26. Shows in June will include Summer Holiday The Musical, based on the Cliff Richard film, and Birdsong to mark the 100th anniversary of the end of the First World War.

Busy start to the new year of gigs



Now the festivities are over, the streamers and empties have been cleaned away at the region's venues and it's time to look forward to some of the best gigs coming up early in 2018.

The mega venues boast the biggest names with Paramore at the Genting Arena on January 14 and Lady Gaga (pictured) with her rescheduled tour calling in at the NEC venue on February 1, the day after her Arena Birmingham gig.

Then the Genting has Kendrick Lamar on February 9, The Script (15th), Imagine Dragons (24th), Morrissey (27th) and pride of Wales the Stereophonics on St David's Day, March 1.

Highlights at Birmingham O2 Academy includes festival favourites The Hunna on Thursday (January 11). Hollywood rockers Black Veil Brides co-headline with York's Asking Alexandria on January 23, punk veterans The Damned visit on February 1, then 80s faves Erasure play on February 11. Other February gigs to watch out for at the Academy include Texan punks Bowling For Soup (13th), Slam Dunk regulars Don Broco (15th) and Scottish indie rock legends Franz Ferdinand back with a new album (20th).

Across the city in Digbeth, things start to get interesting at the O2 Institute on February 1 with tipped-for-the-top Reading rockers The Amazons. American punk veterans The Dead Boys mark 40 years since their debut on February 2 and highly rated young American rockers Highly Suspect play on the same night in the venue's larger room. Expect some Sheffield steel on February 6 when up-and-coming metal monsters When She Sleeps roar into action.

Grammy nominated LA R&B singer-songwriter Jhené Aiko is at the Institute on February 8 and California rockers Alien Ant Farm are in action on February 12.

The voice of Mike & The Mechanics and Ace, Paul Carrack, has two concerts at Symphony Hall Birmingham on February 3 and 18.

Aussie star singer Natalie Imbruglia is at Birmingham Town Hall on February 5 and country pop legends The Mavericks will dance the night away at Symphony Hall on February 8.

Highlights at the Hare and Hounds in Kings Heath include ex-Special Roddy Radiaon with his Skabilly Rebels on January 13 and the following night it's garage rockers The Surfing Magazines (featuring ex-members of The Wave Pictures and Slow Club).

Craig Charles opens his trunk of funk, DJing at the Hare'n on the 19th. Reggae star General Levy visits on January 27 then there are two nights of psychedelic rock with noisy LA outfit Wand (29th) and San Francisco's Moon Duo (30th).

Things will get pretty cosmic too at the Robin 2 in Bilston on Sunday when the latest version of Space Ritual, featuring founder members of Hawkwind Nik Turner and Terry Ollis, beam down for a space rock celebration.

Also coming up at Mount Pleasant venue is the 30th anniversary performance of rock opera Operation Mindcrime by Geoff Tate on January 17 and British blues rocker Aysley Lister Band on the 18th.

Jump n jive with King Pleasure & The Biscuit Boys on January 25, and good time rock n rollers The Quireboys deliver an acoustic set at the Robin on January 28.

Final few recommendations: Watch out for Mobo-winning singer Zara McFarlane at the Hare and Hounds on February 7; the return of Everything Everything after their A Fever Dream album with a gig at the O2 Academy on March 3; and a rare UK outing for American roots outfit Pokey LaFarge at the O2 Institute on March 7.

Offering a warm welcome



Managers Paul and Carol always ensure a warm welcome to customers both old and new at Blackheath's Shoulder of Mutton pub.

For all the sports fans they boast three large TV screens featuring all sports on Sky, BT and all BOX OFFICE Events not to mention AT THE RACES.

For those who like 'doing' rather than 'watching', there is the availability of the pool table and dart board.

Loyalty

The pub itself boasts a wide range of ciders, lagers, wines and spirits including four 'Real Ales' which they rotate weekly. Regulars very often enjoy ales such as Bathams, AJ Ales, Oakham, JHB, Stairway To Heaven and MA Pardoes Entire, plus many more!

The pub also run a loyalty scheme which means customers can get 10p back on their card for every pound they spend.

A pub spokesman added: "With a juke box and free WIFI to compliment the regular entertainment every Friday, customers cannot ask for much more from a local pub!"

SHOULDER OF MUTTON

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Voted Halesowen Chronicle Pub of the Year 2017



Selection of Real Ales including:
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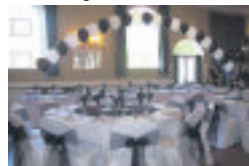
BENJAMINS BANQUETING SUITES

Halesowens premier wedding venue

Benjamins opened in Birmingham Street, Halesowen in December 1997, the building was originally The Primitive Methodist Chapel and supporting buildings erected in 1868 according to the stone over the main entrance, a foundation stone was laid in August 1889 by the then Mayor of Dudley Benjamin Hingley Esq. MP and although not named after Benjamin Hingley the stone was certainly the inspiration for the name of the Banqueting Suite.

The stone now takes pride of place over the fire place in the Cornbow Room.

Set over 2 floors Benjamins can accommodate functions of all sizes upto 450 guests and indeed upto 650 guests if the whole of the building is used for one function as was the case in August 2011!



The Cornbow Room is on the lower floor, it is suitable for parties up to 200 guests, has its own stage for DJ, Band or any other entertainment with access to the large patio area which can be used for Barbecues or Pig Roasts weather

permitting, also due to its layout is ideally suited for smaller events.

The Aldridge and Beaumont Suites are adjacent on the first floor and are usually used as one room for larger parties, ideal for formal weddings due to its open plan layout.

For civil ceremonies where the guests for the ceremony are 100 or less the ceremony is usually conducted in the Beaumont Suite whilst the removable wall is in place between the 2 Banqueting Suites and then the room can be opened out for the Wedding Breakfast and evening guests.

For civil ceremonies where the guest numbers exceed 100 both rooms can be open and used for the service and can accommodate up to 200 guests for the service.

Civil ceremonies for up to 100 guests can also take place in the Cornbow Room.

Civil Ceremonies of less than 100 usually conducted in the Beaumont Suite or Cornbow Rooms.



Jamie Knight as Neil Diamond
Supported by 8 piece backing band

**Saturday
10th February 2018**

**3 course meal and show
£25 or show only £8**



Benjamins Banqueting Suites

Birmingham Street, Halesowen B63 3HN 0121 602 0202

Benjaminsbanquet.co.uk

Ticket

CHOICE



Jim Sturgess

Hard Sun (BBC1, 9.35pm)
A drama series about detectives who stumble across a government conspiracy while investigating a death may not sound particularly original – but the secret that cops Charlie Hicks (Jim Sturgess) and Elaine Renko (Agness Deyn) uncover in Hard Sun involves the end of the world. The mismatched officers are dealing with a murder in the inner-city when they find proof that the Earth faces certain destruction in just five years due to a mysterious cosmic event, a fact the powers-that-be would very much like to keep under wraps. The duo must use every bit of their ingenuity to protect themselves as they are pursued by Secret Service operatives who are willing to silence them for good.

BBC1

6.00 Breakfast. **10.00** Saturday Kitchen Live. **11.30** Mary Berry Everyday. (R) **12.00** BBC News: Weather. **12.15** Football Focus. **12.45** MOTD Live: FA Cup. Fleetwood Town v Leicester City (Kick-off 12.45pm). **3.00** Money for Nothing. (R) **4.00** Final Score. **5.10** Celebrity Mastermind. **5.40** BBC News. **5.50** Regional Programme.
6.00 **And They're Off for Sport Relief.** New series. Ore Oduba hosts a sporting challenge in which celebrities compete in a series of bizarre races, while members of the public try to predict which star will win.
6.40 **Pointless Celebrities.** Alexander Armstrong and Richard Osman present a 1980s edition of the celebrity quiz, featuring four teams of famous faces from the decade seeking unlikely answers.
7.25 **Wedding Day Winners.** New series. Lorraine Kelly and Rob Beckett host a game show in which two couples, aided by friends and family, compete through a series of challenges for the chance to win a televised wedding and a dream honeymoon.
8.30 **Casualty.** The truth about Connie's illness is out, following her dramatic collapse while at work. As she recovers, she is devastated to hear that her colleagues are aware of her terminal diagnosis. Worse still is the news that her tumour has grown, and complications now mean that her consultant refuses to operate. Discharging herself, Connie persuades Ethan to drive her to London for a second opinion, but when she loses consciousness en route and is rushed into emergency surgery, her put-upon protege faces an agonising wait for news. Meanwhile, back at the ED, Dylan struggles to hold the fort, in the absence of more experienced hands.
9.20 **BBC News:** Weather.
9.35 **Hard Sun.** New series. Sci-fi crime drama starring Jim Sturgess and Agniness Deyn as two detectives who must find a way to keep the peace after discovering that the world is about to end.
10.30 **MOTD: FA Cup Highlights:** National Lottery Update.
12.05 The NFL Show. **12.35** Film: The Resident. (2011) **2.00** Weather for the Week Ahead. **2.05** BBC News.

BBC2

6.10 The Wonder of Animals. (R) **6.40** Naomi's Nightmares of Nature. **7.10** The Pets Factor. **7.30** Matilda and the Ramsay Bunch. **8.00** The Denzingers. **8.30** Deadly Top 10. (R) **9.00** World's Sneakiest Animals. (R) **10.00** Homes Under the Hammer. (R) **11.00** Pets – Wild at Heart. (R) **12.00** The Hairy Bikers' Mediterranean Adventure. (R) **1.00** Back to the Land with Kate Humble. (R) **2.00** Rome Unpacked. (R) **3.00** Film: The Letter. (1940) **4.30** Jaguars Born Free: Natural World Special. (R) **5.15** Trust Me, I'm a Doctor. (R) **5.45** Tom Kerridge's Lose Weight For Good. (R)
6.15 **Hugh's Wild West.** New series. Hugh Fearnley-Whittingstall goes in search of wildlife with the most dedicated nature lovers in the West Country, beginning in the Wye Valley and the Forest of Dean.
7.15 **A House Through Time.** Documentary charting 180 years of British history as lived through by the successive inhabitants of a terraced house in Liverpool, from the 1840s to the present day. (R)
8.15 **Dad's Army.** Capt Mainwaring and the platoon offer to help Pte Godfrey's widowed friend gather in the harvest on her farm – but their well-meaning efforts are in predictable chaos. (R)
8.45 **Grand Tours of Scotland's Lochs.** Paul Murton travels from Loch Garloch to Loch Maree, meeting the king and queen of Islonia, matching a medieval feat of archery and diving to a wartime wreck in Loch Ewe.
9.15 **Feud: Bette and Joan.** The convivial atmosphere that Bette is creating with her co-stars frustrates Joan, as she tries to sleep following the beginning of filming in Louisiana.
10.00 **Feud: Bette and Joan.** Both actresses reflect on what might have been and Joan gets a call from her agent, who advises her against appearing in low-budget feature The Missing Link. Last in the series.
11.00 **Live at the Apollo Christmas Special.** Festive fun, hosted by Katherine Ryan, with Marlon Davis, Joel Dommett and John Robins.
11.45 **QI XL.** With Josh Widdicombe.
12.30 Later – with Jools Holland 25th Birthday Show. (R) **2.30** This Is BBC Two.

ITV

6.00 CITV: Sooty. **6.10** Bottom Knocker Street. (R) **6.20** Bottom Knocker Street. (R) **6.35** Dino Dana. (R) **6.50** Super 4. (R) **7.00** Signed Stories: Share a Story. (R) **7.05** Marvel Ultimate Spider-Man vs The Sinister Six. **7.30** Scrambled!: Scrambled! **7.35** Scrambled!: The Tom and Jerry Show. (R) **7.55** Scrambled!: Fangbone. (R) **8.10** Scrambled!: The Powerpuff Girls. (R) **8.30** Scrambled!: Be Cool, Scooby-Do! (R) **9.05** Scrambled!: Wishart. (R) **9.25** ITV News. **9.30** Saturday Morning with James Martin. **11.30** The Hungry Sailors. (R) **12.30** ITV News: Weather. **12.40** Endeavour. (R) **2.40** The Greatest TV Moments of All Time. (R) **4.35** Regional Programme : Weather. **4.45** ITV News: Weather. **4.55** The Chase: Celebrity Special. (R)
6.00 **Catchphrase.** Stephen Mulhern hosts a celebrity special of the game show, with Ellie Simmonds, Fay Ripley and Jimmy Carr guessing the familiar phrases hidden in animated clues.
7.00 **Take Me Out.** New series. A hairdresser, a rugby player, a children's entertainer and a student try to impress 30 single women and win a date. Paddy Guinness presents.
8.00 **The Voice UK.** New series. Emma Willis hosts the seventh series of the singing contest, which this year sees Olly Murs joining returning coaches Will.i.am, Tom Jones and Jennifer Hudson on the famous spinning chairs. The search for a star kicks off, as usual, with the first in a series of rounds of blind auditions, as the panel listen to each contestant with their backs turned, ensuring that they judge the performance on the strength of vocal ability alone. Those who succeed here will progress to the Battle and Knockout phases.
9.35 **ITV News:** Weather.
9.50 **Film: Spectre.** (2015) James Bond goes rogue after receiving a cryptic message that sets him on the trail of a secretive criminal network. While his colleagues face a new threat closer to home, Bond embarks on a globetrotting journey in search of the elusive mastermind behind the syndicate – whom he discovers may have links to his own past. Spy thriller, starring Daniel Craig.
12.30 Jackpot247. **3.00** Babushka. (R) **3.50** ITV Nightscreen.

CHANNEL 4

7.25 Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) **7.50** Frasier. (R) **8.20** Frasier. (R) **8.55** Frasier. (R) **9.25** The Big Bang Theory. (R) **9.50** The Big Bang Theory. (R) **10.20** The Big Bang Theory. (R) **10.30** The Simpsons. (R) **11.15** The Simpsons. (R) **11.45** Sun, Sea and Selling Houses. (R) **12.45** Darts: BDO Lakeside World Professional Championships. Live coverage of the afternoon session on the opening day of the tournament. **5.30** A Place in the Sun: Summer Sun. (R)
6.30 **Channel 4 News.**
7.00 **Spying on the Royals.** Part one of a two-part documentary examining an espionage operation conducted to gather information on Edward VIII and Wallis Simpson. Shown to mark the 80th anniversary of the king's abdication, the programmes examines recently declassified documents revealing the extent of the surveillance and who ordered it, as well as featuring dramatic reconstructions and eyewitness accounts. (R)
8.00 **Princess Diana's "Wicked" Stepmother.** An examination of the turbulent relationship between Diana, Princess of Wales and her formidable stepmother Raine Spencer, who rose from humble origins with the help of her larger-than-life mother, the novelist Barbara Cartland, to become a countess and a member of the royal family. Raine was a divisive figure, who was doted on by her husband Johnnie Spencer but loathed by Diana and her siblings. Yet as the princess's marriage collapsed, she reached out to her stepmother for support, marking a change in the women's relationship. (R)
9.00 **Film: The Hunger Games: Mockingjay – Part 2.** (2015) Premiere. The civilisation of Panem is consumed by a bloody civil war. Reluctant rebel leader Katniss Everdeen leads a band of her allies on a mission to end the conflict at one stroke by assassinating the despotic President Snow – but faces many dangers as she closes in on her target. Conclusion of the sci-fi adventure series based on Suzanne Collins' novels, starring Jennifer Lawrence.
11.40 **Film: The Transporter.** (2002)
1.25 Ramsay's Kitchen Nightmares USA. (R) **2.15** Hollyoaks. (R)

CHANNEL 5

6.00 Milkshake! **9.35** Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles. **10.10** Dogs Make You Laugh Out Loud 2. (R) **10.40** Cruising with Jane McDonald Christmas Special. (R) **11.40** Film: West Side Story. (1961) **2.30** Film: The Hundred-Foot Journey. (2014) Comedy drama, starring Helen Mirren. **3.30** 5 News Update. **3.35** Film: The Hundred-Foot Journey. (2014) Concluded. **4.55** 5 News Weekend. **5.00** Playful Pups Make You Laugh Out Loud. (R)
6.00 **The Wonderful World of Puppies.** New series. Documentary charting the first few months of a dog's life, following different breeds as they take the first steps on their own unique developmental journey. Dalmatians Daphne and Digby start to develop the spots that will mark them out for life, and take their first stumbling steps in the great outdoors. Ruby the toy poodle's huge personality belies her diminutive frame, while abandoned Jack Russell pup Boomer's shattered confidence will need to be rebuilt by the love of a foster home.
7.00 **Greatest Celebrity Wind-Ups.** Ever! Joe Pasquale narrates a special documentary celebrating some of the greatest pranks celebrities have managed to play on each other. (R)
8.00 **Blind Date.** Paul O'Grady hosts a revival of the dating show in which a drama teacher from Surrey and a digger driver from Hull must choose between three unseen suitors.
9.00 **Celebrity Big Brother.** Frida's highlights from the house, including another chance to see what surprise Big Brother sprung on the women last night.
10.00 **Worst Celebrity Pop Songs Ever.** A countdown of the 40 most memorable records by celebrities, featuring performances by Mr T, Katie Price, Vinne Jones, Sam Fox and an assortment of soap stars. (R)
11.45 **Lip Sync Battle UK: Rufus Hound v Jorgie Porter.** Melanie Brown and Professor Green present the musical game show as comedian Rufus Hound and actress Jorgie Porter go head to head lip-synching to a hit song. (R)
12.15 SuperCasino. **3.10** Secrets of the National Trust with Alan Titchmarsh. (R) **4.00** GPs: Behind Closed Doors. (R) **4.45** House Doctor. (R)

DIGITAL

BBC Four
7.00 Shipwrecks: Britain's Sunken History **8.00** Alaska – Earth's Frozen Kingdom **9.00** Spiral 11.05 The Vietnam War 12.00 See Gees at the BBC and Beyond **1.00** Dia at the BBC **2.00** Alaska – Earth's Frozen Kingdom **3.00** Shipwrecks: Britain's Sunken History **4.00** Close
ITV2
12.00 The Big Soap Quiz: Coronation Street v Emmerdale **1.00** Ant & Dec's Saturday Night Takeaway Presents – Who Shot Simon Cowell? **1.30** You've Been Framed! Gold **3.05** Film: Legally Blonde (2001) **4.05** FYI Daily **4.10** Film: Legally Blonde (2001) **4.55** Film: Hotel Transylvania (2012) **5.55** FYI Daily **6.00** Film: Hotel Transylvania (2012) **6.00** Film: The Mummy (1999) **7.40** FYI Daily **7.45** Film: The Mummy (1999) **9.00** Film: The Hangover (2009) **10.00** FYI Daily **10.05** Film: The Hangover (2009) **11.10** Family Guy 12.10 American Dad! **1.05** Film: Paranoia (2013) **2.05** Film **2.10** Film: Paranoia (2013) **3.00** Teleshopping
ITV3
11.05 Foyle's War **1.10** Film: Columbo: Suitable for Framing (1971) **2.55** Midsomer Murders (1990) The Suspicions of Mr Whicher: The Murder in Angel Lane **1.00** On the Buses **2.00** ITV3 Nightscreen **2.30** Teleshopping
ITV4
1.30 ITV Racing: Live from Sandown & Wincanton. Ed Chamberlin presents live coverage of today's race meetings. **4.05** Film: Khartoum (1966) **5.10** FYI Daily **5.15** Film: Khartoum (1966) **6.45** Film: Dr No (1962) **7.50** FYI Daily **7.55** Film: Dr No (1962) **9.00** Film: The Enforcer (1976) **10.00** FYI Daily **10.05** Film: The Enforcer (1976) **11.05** Film: Platoon (1986) **12.10** FYI Daily **12.15** Film: Platoon (1986) **1.25** Car Crash Global: Caught on Camera **2.25** Tommy Cooper **2.50** ITV4 Nightscreen **E4**
12.30 Don't Tell the Bride **1.35** The Goldbergs **4.00** The Big Bang Theory **9.00** Film: Red (2010) **11.10** Googlebox **1.20** Rude Tube: Love Bytes **2.20** Googlebox **3.15** First Dates **4.10** How I Met Your Mother **4.55** Rude(ish) Tube **Film4**
11.00 Diary of a Wimpy Kid: Dog Days (2012) **1.00** The Indian in the Cupboard (1995) **2.50** Rio (2011) **4.40** Total Fairy (2010) **6.45** G1 Joe: Retaliation (2013) **9.00** Now You See Me (2013) **11.15** Insidious: Chapter 3 (2015) **1.10** Mr Nice (2010) **3.35** Close

BABBACOMBE - HOTEL DE LA MER Winter Warmer Monday 29th Jan - Friday 2nd Feb 2018 5 Days \$169
MYSTERY?? - FREE BAR, POOL & LEISURE FACILITIES Monday 5th - Friday 9th Feb 2018 5 Days \$199
WESTON SUPER MARE - SANDRINGHAM HOTEL £2 Bar All Week Monday 12th - Friday 16th Feb 2018 5 Days \$175
TORQUAY - NETHWAY HOTEL Monday 19th - Friday 23rd Feb 2018 Winter Warmer 5 Days SOLD OUT \$159
CABARET MYSTERY 4 DAY TOUR? - WHERE WILL WE BE? HOTEL Friday 23rd - Monday 26th Feb 2018 4 Days \$119
LLANDUDNO - ST KILDA HOTEL *** We'll Meet Again Monday 26th Feb - Friday 2nd March 2018 Theme 5 Days \$235
MYSTERY 4 DAY TOUR? - WHERE WILL WE BE? HOTEL Friday 2nd - Monday 5th March 2018 4 Days \$139
EASTBOURNE - HADDON HALL Monday 5th - Friday 9th March 2018 5 Days \$235
CABARET MYSTERY 4 DAY TOUR? - WHERE WILL WE BE? HOTEL Friday 16th - Monday 19th March 2018 4 Days \$139
EXMOUTH - CAVENDISH HOTEL Monday 19th - Friday 23rd March 2018 5 Days \$225
CABARET MYSTERY 4 DAY TOUR? - WHERE WILL WE BE? HOTEL Friday 23rd - Monday 26th March 2018 4 Days \$139
BOGNOR REGIS - ROYAL NORFOLK HOTEL Monday 26 - Friday 30th March 2018 5 Days \$225
PORTCAWL - SEABANK HOTEL Easter Friday 30th March - Monday 2nd April 2018 4 Days \$209
SIDMOUTH - ROYAL YORK & FAULKNER HOTEL Easter week Monday 2nd - Friday 6th April 2018 5 Days \$329
SPRING WEEKEND MYSTERY - WHERE WILL WE BE? HOTEL Friday 6th - Monday 9th April 2018 4 Days \$149
WEYMOUTH - FAIRHAVEN HOTEL Monday 9th - Friday 13th April 2018 5 Days \$269
ILFRACOMBE - IMPERIAL HOTEL Monday 16th - Friday 20th April 2018 5 Days \$219
WARNERS CORTON COASTAL VILLAGE Monday 16th - Friday 20th April 2018 5 Days \$279
WEEKEND MYSTERY - WHERE WILL WE BE? HOTEL Saturday 21st - Sunday 22nd April 2018 2 Days \$79
TENBY - CLARENCE HOUSE HOTEL Monday 23rd - Friday 27th April 2017 5 Days SOLD OUT \$269
TORQUAY - NETHWAY HOTEL Motown Weekend Friday 27th - Sunday 29th April 2018 3 Days \$119
PAIGNTON - HOTEL BONAIR ESPLANADE Monday 30th April - Friday 4th May 2018 5 Days \$235
BABBACOMBE - HOTEL DE LA MER Friday 4th - Sunday 6th May 2018 3 Days \$125
LLANDUDNO - QUEENS HOTEL Monday 7th - Friday 11th May 2018 5 Days \$309
GREAT YARMOUTH - NEW BEACH HOTEL Wednesday 9th - Sunday 13th May 2018 5 Days \$235

CROMER - HOTEL DE PARIS NEW Sunday 13th - Saturday 19th May 2018 7 Days \$365
MORECAMBE LAKES & DALES - AUCKLAND HOTEL Monday 14th - Friday 18th May 2018 5 Days \$259
MYSTERY SOUTH COAST - WHERE WILL WE BE? HOTEL Friday 18th - Monday 21st May 2018 4 Days \$159
EASTBOURNE - THE HADLEIGH HOTEL Monday 21st - Friday 25th May 2018 5 Days \$289
MYSTERY WEEKEND - WHERE WILL WE BE? HOTEL Saturday 26th - Sunday 27th May 2018 2 Days \$79
LONDON - 5 STAR WALDORF HOTEL ***** Treat Yourself! Sunday 27th - Monday 28th May 2018 2 Days \$119
TORQUAY - HOWDEN COURT HOTEL Monday 28th May - Friday 1st June 2018 5 Days \$259
SETTLE TO CARLISLE RAILWAY - AUCKLAND HOTEL Friday 1st - Sunday 3rd June 2018 3 Days \$149
PAIGNTON - HOTEL BONAIR ESPLANADE Saturday 2nd - Saturday 9th June 2018 8 Days \$365
PORTHCAWL - SEABANK HOTEL Wednesday 6th - Sunday 10th June 2018 5 Days \$275
NEWQUAY - ELIOT HOTEL Sunday 10th - Saturday 16th June 2018 7 Days \$359
LYTHAM ST ANNES - LINDUN HOTEL Monday 11th - Friday 15th June 2018 5 Days \$265
MYSTERY WEEKEND - WHERE WILL WE BE? HOTEL Saturday 16th - Sunday 17th June 2018 2 Days \$79
SIDMOUTH - THE BEDFORD HOTEL Monday 18th - Friday 22nd June 2018 5 Days \$349
ISLE OF WIGHT - THE TROUVILLE HOTEL, SANDOWN Monday 18th - Saturday 23rd June 2018 6 Days \$359
TORQUAT - NETHWAY HOTEL Motown Weekend Friday 22nd - Sunday 24th June 2018 3 Days \$119
BABBACOMBE - HOTEL DE LA MER Sunday 23th - Wednesday 27th June 2018 5 Days \$269
EASTBOURNE - HADDON HALL Saturday 30th June - Saturday 7th July 2018 8 Days \$439
SCARBOROUGH - CUMBERLAND HOTEL New Wednesday 4th - Sunday 8th July 2018 5 Days \$275
WARNERS AVASTON HALL HOTEL New Monday 9th - Friday 13th July 2018 5 Days \$375
WEYMOUTH - FAIRHAVEN HOTEL Monday 9th - Friday 13th July 2018 5 Days \$309
TORQUAY - NETHWAY HOTEL Motown Weekend Friday 13th - Sunday 15th July 2018 3 Days \$119
SKEGNESS - SAVOY HOTEL Monday 16th - Friday 20th July 2018 5 Days \$299
TORQUAY - HOWDEN COURT HOTEL Saturday 21st - Saturday 28th July 2018 8 Days \$399
BOURNEMOUTH - ULLSWATER HOTEL Monday 23rd - Friday 27th July 2018 5 Days \$265

ISLE OF WIGHT - BAYSHORE HOTEL, SANDOWN NEW Saturday 28th July - Saturday 4th August 2018 8 Days \$439
WARNER LAKESIDE COASTAL VILLAGE NEW Monday 6th - Friday 10th August 2018 5 Days \$309
MYSTERY WEEKEND - WHERE WILL WE BE? HOTEL Saturday 11th - Sunday 12th August 2018 2 Days \$79
PAIGNTON - HOTEL BONAIR ESPLANADE Saturday 11th - Saturday 18th August 2018 8 Days \$379
ST IVES - COTTAGE HOTEL Sunday 19th - Saturday 25th August 2018 7 Days \$379
TENBY - CLARENCE HOUSE HOTEL Sunday 26th - Thursday 30th August 2018 5 Days \$309
SETTLE TO CARLISLE RAILWAY - AUCKLAND HOTEL Friday 31st August - Sunday 2nd Sept 2018 3 Days \$149
MYSTERY WEEKEND - WHERE WILL WE BE? HOTEL Saturday 1st - Sunday 2nd Sept 2018 2 Days \$79
LLANDUDNO - THE MARLBOROUGH HOTEL Monday 3rd - Friday 7th Sept 2018 5 Days \$299
EASTBOURNE - LANGHAM HOTEL Monday 3rd - Friday 7th Sept 2018 5 Days \$309
BABBACOMBE - HOTEL DE LA MER Saturday 8TH - Wednesday 12th Sept 2018 5 Days \$279
SCARBOROUGH - RED LEA HOTEL Monday 10 - Friday 14th Sept 2018 5 Days \$299
HAYLING ISLAND - MILL RYTHE HOLIDAY VILLAGE Monday 10th - Friday 14th Sept 2018 5 Days \$239
WEYMOUTH - FAIRHAVEN HOTEL Monday 17th - Friday 21st Sept 2018 5 Days \$309
LYTHAM ST ANNES - LINDUN HOTEL Monday 17th - Friday 21st Sept 2018 5 Days \$279
MYSTERY WEEKEND - WHERE WILL WE BE? HOTEL Friday 21st - Monday 24th Sept 2018 4 Days \$199
TORQUAY - NETHWAY HOTEL Monday 24th - Friday 28th Sept 2018 5 Days \$245
MORECAMBE - CARLISLE/SETTLE RAILWAY & SCOTISH BORDERS AUCKLAND HOTEL Monday 24th - Friday 28th Sept 2018 5 Days \$289
CRICCIETH - GEORGE IV HOTEL Monday 1st - Friday 5th October 2018 5 Days \$219
MYSTERY WEEKEND - WHERE WILL WE BE? HOTEL Saturday 6th - Sunday 7th October 2018 2 days \$79
SCOTLAND DUNOON - SELBOURNE HOTEL NEW Sunday 7th - Saturday 13th October 2018 7 Days \$279
WEYMOUTH - NORFOLK HOTEL NEW Friday 12th - Monday 15th October 2018 4 Days \$139
BLACKPOOL ILLUMINATIONS - CARN-BRAE HOTEL Monday 15th - Friday 19th October 2018 5 Days \$229
WARNERS - CRICKET ST THOMAS HOTEL NEW Monday 15th - Friday 19th October 2018 5 Days \$359
TORQUAY - NETHWAY HOTEL Motown Weekend Friday 19th - Sunday 21st October 2018 3 Days \$119

GREENLINE BASH! - 5 DAY MYSTERY NEW Monday 22nd - Friday 26th October 2018 5 Days \$209
BLACKPOOL ILLUMINATIONS - CARN-BRAE HOTEL Saturday 27th - Monday 29th October 2018 3 Days \$149
LONDON - 5 STAR WALDORF HOTEL***** Treat Yourself! Sunday 28th - Monday 29 October 2018 2 Days \$119
PAIGNTON - HOTEL BONAIR ESPLANADE Turkey & Tinsel Monday 29th Oct - Friday 2nd Nov 2018 5 Days \$239
TORQUAY - HOWDEN COURT HOTEL Turkey & Tinsel with a Halloween Twist Monday 29th Oct - Friday 2nd Nov 2018 5 Days \$269
TORQUAY - NETHWAY HOTEL Turkey & Tinsel Friday 2nd - Sunday 4th Nov 2018 3 Days \$119
EASTBOURNE - HADDON HALL HOTEL Turkey & Tinsel Monday 5th - Friday 9th Nov 2018 5 Days \$290
WESTON-SUPER-MARE - SANDRINGHAM HOTEL Monday 5th - Friday 9th Nov 2018 5 Days \$249
MYSTERY WEEKEND - WHERE WILL WE BE? HOTEL Turkey & Tinsel Saturday 10th - Sunday 11th Nov 2018 2 Days \$79
LLANDUDNO - QUEENS HOTEL Turkey & Tinsel Monday 12th - Friday 16th Nov 2018 5 Days \$275
BABBACOMBE - HOTEL DE LA MER Turkey & Tinsel Tuesday 13th - Saturday 17th Nov 2018 5 Days \$259
MYSTERY TURKEY & TINSEL - WHERE WILL WE BE? HOTEL Turkey & Tinsel Friday 16th - Monday 19th Nov 2018 4 Days \$159
TENBY - CLARENCE HOUSE HOTEL Turkey & Tinsel Monday 19th - Friday 23rd Nov 2018 5 Days \$279
SIDMOUTH - ROYAL YORKS & FAULKNER HOTEL Turkey & Tinsel Wednesday 21st - Sunday 25th Nov 2018 5 Days \$299
PORTHCAWL - SEABANK HOTEL Turkey & Tinsel Monday 26th - Friday 30th Nov 2018 5 Days \$239
GREAT YARMOUTH - NEW BEACH HOTEL Thurstford Spectacular Friday 30th November - Monday 3rd Dec 2018 4 Days \$259
CROMER - HOTEL DE PARIS Thurstford Spectacular Friday 7th - Monday 10th Dec 2018 4 Days \$259
LONDON - 5 STAR WALDFORF HOTEL ***** Christmas Shopping Sunday 16th - Monday 17th Dec 2018 2 Days \$119
PAIGNTON - HOTEL BONAIR ESPLANADE Christmas Sunday 23rd - Thursday 27th Dec 2018 5 Days \$420
TORQUAY - NETHWAY HOTEL Christmas Sunday 23rd - Thursday 27th Dec 2018 5 Days \$429
BABBACOMBE - HOTEL DE LA MER Twixmas Thursday 27th - Sunday 30th Dec 2018 4 Days \$179
TORQUAY - NETHWAY HOTEL Twixmas Thursday 27th - Sunday 30th Dec 2018 4 Days \$179
TENBY - CLARENCE HOUSE HOTEL New Year Sun 30th Dec 2018 - Wed 2nd Jan 2019 4 Days \$349
ILFRACOMBE - IMPERIAL HOTEL New Year Sun 30th Dec 2018 - Wed 2nd Jan 2019 4 Days \$365
LLANDUDNO - ST KILDA HOTEL *** New Year Sun 30th Dec 2018 - Wed 2nd Jan 2019 4 Days \$379

CHOICE



Holly Willoughby (left)

Dancing on Ice (ITV, 6pm)

Some shows just run and run, never pausing for breath and seemingly always at the top of the ratings tree. Others burn brightly, fade away and need a wee rest before coming back better than ever. ITV is hoping that Dancing on Ice falls into the latter category. It ran for nine series between 2006 and 2014, then took a break. Now it's back, as are presenters Holly Willoughby and Phillip Schofield and judge Jason Gardiner; Jayne Torvill and Christopher Dean return too, but as judges rather than mentors, while Ashley Banjo will also offer his opinions. But it's the participants we're most interested in, and they're a mixed bunch.

BBC1

6.00 Breakfast. **7.30** MOTD: FA Cup Highlights. (R) **9.00** The Andrew Marr Show. **10.00** The Big Questions. **11.00** Homes Under the Hammer. (R) **12.00** Bargain Hunt. (R) **1.00** BBC News: Weather. **1.15** Wallace & Gromit: A Grand Day Out. (R) **1.40** MOTD Live: FA Cup. Shrewsbury Town v West Ham United (Kick-off 2.00pm). **4.00** Escape to the Country. (R) **4.30** Songs of Praise. **5.05** Antiques Roadshow. (R)

6.05 BBC News.

6.20 Regional Programme.

6.30 Countryfile. The team explores the Ribble Valley. Matt Baker visits the Gismburn Forest. Anita Rani meets refugees who are discovering farming in the snow, and Adam Henson learns about stallions that have a vital role to play in preserving rare breeds of horses. Plus, Tom Heap reports on a controversy surrounding new rules on gun licensing. Including weather for the week ahead.

7.30 Still Open All Hours. Granville has a still open for growing the business and branches out into offering fitness classes, while Mr Newbold undergoes an image overhaul to repel Mrs Featherstone.

8.00 Attenborough and the Sea Dragon. The naturalist joins a team of scientists examining the 200 million-year-old fossilised remains of an ichthyosaur, a vast sea creature which was discovered on Dorset's Jurassic Coast. As the skeleton is reassembled, advanced imaging technology and computer animation is used to create a simulation of the sea creature as it would have appeared when it was still alive – the most detailed reconstruction of its kind ever attempted. Meanwhile, forensic investigators painstakingly examine the bones to solve the mystery of how the ichthyosaur died.

9.00 McMaflax. Alex receives an offer from someone claiming to be an old friend, and Semmyon seeks backing for his business venture – while Lyudmila uncovers his investors' secrets.

10.00 BBC News.

10.20 Regional Programme.

10.30 MOTD: FA Cup Highlights.

11.30 The Women's Football Show.

12.05 Weather for the Week Ahead.

12.10 BBC News.

BBC2

6.20 Coast. (R) **7.20** The Instant Gardener. (R) **8.05** Gardeners' World. (R) **8.35** Greatest Gardens. (R) **9.05** Countryfile. (R) **10.00** Saturday Kitchen Best Bits. **11.30** Raymond Blanc: How to Cook Well. (R) **12.00** Food & Drink (R) **12.30** The A to Z of TV Cooking. (R) **12.40** Meet the Moose Family: Natural World. (R) **1.40** Money for Nothing. (R) **2.10** Talking Pictures: Maggie Smith. (R) **2.50** Film: Ladies in Lavender. (2004) Period drama, starring Judy Dench and Maggie Smith. **4.30** Flog It! (R) **5.15** Ski Sunday.

6.00 The Real T. Rex with Chris Packham. Chris Packham embarks on a global journey to discover the truth about the Tyrannosaurus rex, which has endured centuries of scientific inaccuracy and Hollywood misrepresentation. The naturalist uses new studies into dinosaur skin, teeth and muscles, as well as groundbreaking insights into its behaviour to create the most accurate CGI representation of the dinosaur ever produced. To help, Chris speaks to experts in birds, biomechanics and alligators, and has access to one of the most complete Tyrannosaurus rex skeletons in existence. (R)

7.00 Robot Wars Special 2017: The World Series. The second of two specials pitting champions from past series against rivals from other countries, featuring contenders from Russia, the USA, Canada and the Netherlands.

8.00 Dragons' Den. A serial entrepreneur pitches his online greeting card business, and a Surrey-based inventor hopes his word game could become a family Christmas favourite. (R)

9.00 Michael Palin: A Life on Screen. The actor and writer looks back on his career. Featuring classic clips from the archives and contributions from collaborators John Cleese, David Jason and Armando Iannucci.

10.00 Film: And Now for Something Completely Different. (1971) Compilation of sketches from the first two series of Monty Python's Flying Circus. Starring John Cleese, Michael Palin, Terry Jones, Graham Chapman, Eric Idle and Terry Gilliam.

11.25 Film: Strictly Ballroom. (1992) **1.00** Sign Zone: Countryfile. (R) **1.55** Holby City. (R) **2.55** This Is BBC Two.

ITV

6.00 CITV: Sooty. **6.10** Bottom Knocker Street. (R) **6.20** Bottom Knocker Street. (R) **6.35** Dino Dana. (R) **6.50** Super 4. (R) **7.00** Signed Stories: Share a Story. (R) **7.05** Marvel Ultimate Spider-Man vs The Sinister Six. **7.30** Scrambled!: Scrambled! **7.35** Scrambled!: The Tom and Jerry Show. (R) **7.55** Scrambled!: Ben 10. **8.10** Scrambled!: Mr Bean: The Animated Series. (R) **8.30** Scrambled!: Spy School. **9.05** Scrambled!: Wishfart. (R) **9.25** ITV News. **9.30** River Monsters. (R) **9.55** The Voice UK. (R) **11.30** Tipping Point. (R) **12.30** ITV News: Weather. **12.40** A Right Royal Quiz. (R) **1.40** The Big Soap Quiz: Coronation Street v Emmerdale. (R) **2.45** Catchphrase. (R) **3.45** Regional Programme : Weather. **4.00** ITV News: Weather. **4.10** Film: Happy Feet Two. (2011) Animated musical comedy sequel, with the voice of Elijah Wood.

6.00 Dancing on Ice. New series. Celebrities and professional partners figure skaters pair up as after a four-year break, Holly Willoughby and Phillip Schofield reunite as hosts of the popular dance contest. Jayne Torvill and Christopher Dean are also back, though as judges rather than mentors, alongside Jason Gardiner and Ashley Banjo. This year's contestants are Donna Air, Cheryl Baker, Alex Beresford, Candice Cotton, Kem Cetinay, Antony Cotton, Max Evans, Lemar, Jake Quickenden, Perri Shakes-Drayton, Brooke Vincent and Stephanie Waring.

8.00 Vera. New series. The detective investigates when charred human remains are found in an abattoir furnace, and attempts to deduce who they belong to and how they came to be here. Brenda Blethyn returns for an eighth series of mysteries based on Ann Cleeves' novels.

10.00 ITV News: Weather.

10.10 Film: Captain Phillips. (2013)

The captain of a cargo ship travelling around the coast of Somalia is taken hostage when pirates raid the vessel. Fact-based thriller, starring Tom Hanks and Barkhad Abdi.

12.35 Great Art. (R) **1.30** Jackpot247. Interactive gaming. **3.00** Sunday Night at the Palladium. (R) **3.50** ITV Nightscreen. Text-based information service. **5.05** The Jeremy Kyle Show. (R)

CHANNEL 4

6.15 The King of Queens. (R) **6.40** The King of Queens. (R) **7.05** The King of Queens. (R) **7.35** Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) **7.55** Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) **8.25** Frasier. (R) **9.00** Frasier. (R) **9.30** Sunday Brunch. **12.30** Darts: BDO Lakeside World Professional Championships. Live coverage of the afternoon session on the second day of the tournament. **5.30** The Great Festive Bake Off. (R)

6.45 Channel 4 News.

7.00 The World's Wildest Weather. Footage shot by members of the public of unusual and dangerous weather from around the world, including Alpine avalanches and cyclones in the South Pacific. The programme features first-hand accounts of the events featured and scientific analysis of the footage and how the strange weather conditions came about.

8.00 The Biggest Little Railway in the World. New series. Dick Strawbridge leads a team of enthusiasts attempting to build the longest model railway in history, stretching 71 miles across Scotland from Fort William on the west coast to Inverness on the east coast. The project faces an early challenge navigating the Caledonian Canal, but a train ferry proves an ingenious solution. The team must also apply full-size railway technology to the task of traversing Loch Lochy.

9.00 SAS: Who Dares Wins. New series. Reality show in which people are put through SAS recruitment tests to see whether they can match up to the pressures the elite regiment faces. This time, the show comes from Morocco's Atlas Mountains, and chief Instructor Ant Middleton and his Directing Staff have come up with an intensified course for the 25 volunteers.

10.00 Film: The Sweeney. (2012) An insubordinate detective and his loyal partner must crack a robbery case while under investigation from their superiors. Crime thriller, starring Ray Winstone and Ben Drew.

12.10 Film: Moonrise Kingdom. (2012) Comedy drama, with Bruce Willis and Edward Norton. **1.55** Grand Designs Australia. (R) **2.50** Location, Location, Location. (R) **3.45** KOTV Boxing Weekly. **4.15** Coast vs Country. (R) **5.10** Four in a Bed. (R) **5.35** Countdown. (R)

CHANNEL 5

6.00 Milkshake!: Little Princess. **6.10** Wanda and the Alien. (R) **6.20** Poppy Cat. (R) **6.35** Whisper. (R) **6.40** Milkshake! Monkey. (R) **6.45** Milkshake! Sopping About. (R) **6.50** Simon. (R) **6.55** Peppa Pig. (R) **7.00** Paw Patrol. (R) **7.15** Thomas & Friends. (R) **7.25** Fireman Sam. (R) **7.35** Olly the Little White Van. (R) **7.40** Blaze and the Monster Machines. (R) **8.05** Paw Patrol. (R) **8.25** Nella the Princess Knight. **8.40** Noddy: Toyland Detective. (R) **8.55** Ben and Holly's Little Kingdom. (R) **9.05** Shimmer and Shine. (R) **9.25** Digby Dragon. (R) **9.40** Peppa Pig. (R) **9.45** Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles. **10.20** Pets Make You Laugh Out Loud. **10.40** Film: Groundhog Day. (1993) **12.40** Film: Practical Magic. (1998) **2.40** Will & Grace. (R) **3.10** Blind Date. (R) **4.15** Film: The Love Punch. (2013)

6.00 The Two Ronnies: In Their Own Words. A celebration of the lives and careers of comedy duo Ronnie Barker and Ronnie Corbett, featuring performances, chat show appearances and rare and long-forgotten archive material. (R)

8.00 Aviva Premiership Rugby Highlights. Mark Durden-Smith and David Flatman present action from the 13th round of matches, including Worcester Warriors v Bath, Northampton Saints v Gloucester, and Wasps v Saracens.

8.55 5 News Weekend.

9.00 Celebrity Big Brother. Highlights of another day for the illustrious inhabitants as they cope with the day-to-day complications of life under the all-seeing eye of Big Brother.

10.00 Film: Hot Pursuit. (2015) Premiere. An uptight police officer has to protect a gangster's widow as they go on the run from hitmen and corrupt cops. Crime comedy, with Reese Witherspoon.

11.00 5 News Update.

11.05 Film: Hot Pursuit. (2015) Concluded.

11.50 One Night with My Ex. Former couples decide if they should get back together, including Jay and Sandy, whose passionate relationship ended when she heard rumours he had been unfaithful. (R)

12.50 Lip Sync Battle UK: Jimmy Carr vs Alexander Armstrong. (R) **1.15** SuperCasino. **3.10** GPs: Behind Closed Doors. (R) **4.00** Now That's Funny! (R)

DIGITAL

BBC Four

7.00 Only Connect **7.30** Britain on Film: Messing About in Boats **8.00** Dan Snow on Lloyd George: My Great Great Grandfather **9.00** Engineering Giants: Ferry Strip-Down **10.00** The Bridge: Fifty Years Across the Forth **11.00** Film: Stations of the Cross (2014) **12.45** Dan Snow on Lloyd George: My Great Great Grandfather **1.45** Engineering Giants: Ferry Strip-Down **2.45** The Bridge: Fifty Years Across the Forth **3.45** Close

ITV2

12.35 Take Me Out **1.40** The Voice UK **3.20** Film: The Mummy: Tomb of the Dragon Emperor (2008) **4.50** FYI Daily **4.55** Film: The Mummy: Tomb of the Dragon Emperor (2008) **5.25** Film: The Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring (2001) **6.25** FYI Daily **6.30** Film: The Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring (2001) **9.00** Ibiza Weekender **10.00** Family Guy **11.30** American Dad! **12.30** Film: Delivery Man (2013) **1.35** FYI Daily **1.40** Film: Delivery Man (2013) **2.30** Teleshopping

ITV3

11.35 Foyle's War **5.50** Endeavour **8.00** Les Dawson: An Audience With That Never Was **9.00** Tonight at the London Palladium **10.00** Agatha Christie's Marple **12.00** Midsomer Murders **1.50** Executed **2.45** Road to Avonlea **4.35** On the Buses **5.30** ITV3 Nightscreen

ITV4

11.25 Pawn Stars **1.45** Film: The Sea Wolves (1980) **2.50** FYI Daily **2.55** Film: The Sea Wolves (1980) **4.10** Film: Khartoum (1966) **5.10** FYI Daily **5.15** Film: Khartoum (1966) **6.50** Hornblower **9.00** Film: Ransom (1996) **10.05** FYI Daily **10.10** Film: Ransom (1996) **11.30** Film: RoboCop 3 (1993) **12.30** FYI Daily **12.35** Film: RoboCop 3 (1993) **1.35** The Professionals **2.35** The Protectors **3.00** Teleshopping

E4

12.00 Film: The Borrowers (1997) **1.40** Rude(s)h Tube Shorts **2.00** The Big Bang Theory **7.00** Film: Titanic (1997) **10.50** Film: American Reunion (2012) **1.05** Gogglebox **2.10** First Dates **3.15** Rude Tube **3.40** Hollyoaks

Film4

11.00 Stuart Little (1999) **1.00** Robots (2005) **2.40** Antz (1998) **4.20** Home Alone (1990) **6.25** The Core (2003) Sci-fi thriller, starring Aaron Eckhart. **9.00** Die Hard 2 (1990) Action thriller sequel, starring Bruce Willis. **11.25** Savages (2012) **2.00** The Pool (2007) **4.00** Close

Just the ticket for Parrys International at open day

Commercial feature

Multiple award winning coach holiday company – Parrys International, will open its doors to the public on Sunday January 14 for its very popular annual open day.

With the release of the new 2018 brochures, the company is inviting members of the public to view their premises, luxury coaches and meet some of their international hotel and attraction providers.

It also gives the chance for people to gain information from the many staff – drivers and couriers – who will be on hand to help visitors experience and see the luxury coach features that are unique to the company.

They will even be able to book holidays with a number of special offers for the upcoming season.

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Hotel representatives will be available from Hilton Worldwide Hotels, Marriott, Holiday Inn, Accor Hotels, Warners and individual hotels from Scotland, Luxembourg, Ireland, Germany, Spain and the Isle of Wight.

Parrys International are also main team sponsors of Wolverhampton Speedway, and their management and a top rider will be in attendance.

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There are regular trips to Lake Garda

operating throughout the year.

The open Day runs from 10am until 3pm and is hosted at their garage and offices in Landywood Green, Cheslyn Hay.

More information from the company can be obtained by calling 01922 414576.



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FILM CHOICES

MONDAY

Killer Mom, Channel 5, 3.15pm
Premiere. When 14-year-old Allison loses her father in a plane crash a few years after her adoptive mother died, she is devastated. At the funeral, she is shocked to meet her birth mother Jessica, who is intent on controlling the \$40m her daughter is set to inherit. Thriller, starring Karen Cliche. (2017)

TUESDAY

Eyewitness, Channel 5, 3.15pm
After her testimony sent him to jail, a woman finds herself held captive in her own home when the man who murdered her father and fiancée escapes from prison to confront her. Thriller, starring Lindy Booth, Craig Ojeijnik and Jon McLaren. (2017)

WEDNESDAY

The Social Network, Channel 4, 1.10am
Fact-based drama following internet billionaire Mark Zuckerberg's rise to wealth and fame. An online prank played on an ex-girlfriend gives Harvard student Zuckerberg the idea for Facebook, which soon expands away from the famous university into a worldwide phenomenon. However, in getting his project off the ground, he makes enemies of those who helped him along the way. With Jesse Eisenberg, Andrew Garfield and Justin Timberlake. (2010)



The Social Network, Wednesday, Channel 4, 1.10am

THURSDAY

Dear Diary, I Died, Channel 5, 3.15pm
When a college student appears to have committed suicide, her sister tries to uncover the secrets behind her death. Thriller, starring Katherine Kelly Lang, Whitney Rose Pynn and John J York. Edited for language. (2016)

FRIDAY

Amy, Channel 4, 12.10am
Documentary portrait of soul, jazz and R'n'B singer-songwriter Amy Winehouse, whose untimely death in July 2011 followed a well-publicised history of drugs and alcohol abuse. Director Asif Kapadia traces Amy's rise and demise over the 13 years preceding her death, telling her story via her music and autobiographical song lyrics. (2015).

The boys are back in town for a thrilling new series

When ITV launched the action drama series Lethal Weapon last year, a lot of viewers were initially sceptical about its chances of success. For a start, it's rare for US series to be shown on the channel in primetime – even the acclaimed The Americans struggled in the ratings and was eventually moved to ITV Encore.

And then there's the fact that Lethal Weapon was based on a hugely successful movie franchise – would viewers be able to accept a Riggs and Murtaugh who were played by anyone other than Mel Gibson and Danny Glover?

It seems even actor Clayne Crawford, who plays the Gibson role of loose cannon Riggs, didn't expect audiences to share his enthusiasm for the show.

He told Collider: "I read the script on a plane and I had that moment of being a 12-year-old boy, who just wants to play cowboys and superheroes. I was like, 'This is a cowboy superhero!' I called my wife and said, 'Look, I think I'm

gonna say yes, but there's no way it will make it past three episodes."

Luckily, he was proved wrong. Not only did US audiences take the revamped Lethal Weapon to their hearts, but so did UK viewers – meaning not only is there a second season, but it's now back on ITV.

For anyone who missed the first series (or the films that inspired it), it focuses on the cop duo of Riggs, a reckless former Navy SEAL who moved to LA following the deaths of his wife Miranda and their unborn child, and Murtaugh (Damon Wayans), a steady family man who returned to the force following a heart attack.

The previous run ended with Murtaugh discovering just how far Riggs was prepared to go in pursuit of his wife's killers.

In this opening episode, Riggs is in Mexico, where he plans to avenge Miranda's death and finish off Tito Flores (Danny Mora) once and for all – but the cop's loyal partner is on his trail.

Once the duo are back in the US, they face some tough questions due to the ongoing investigation into Flores' activities – and Murtaugh's family also have a few points they'd like to get cleared up.

Meanwhile, Captain Avery (Kevin Rahm) is questioned by Internal Affairs about the integrity of his department.

But if the Miranda storyline does get wrapped up, can we expect a calmer, more responsible Riggs in the rest of season 2?

It seems not, as Crawford says that the forthcoming episodes will reveal that some of his character's problems predate the tragic loss of his family. Speaking to Collider, he said: "The beauty of TV is that you have 22 hours to tell a story, so we're gonna really find out who Riggs is and who he was before, and go into his childhood to see that it started out bad.

"I don't think we ever want Riggs healthy. The more Riggs is a mess, the more fun it is."



Lethal Weapon, Friday, ITV, 9pm

BEST OF THE REST

MONDAY

Silent Witness BBC1, 9pm
New series. Part one of two. Nikki struggles to come to terms with life back home and seeks out fellow pathologist Sally Vaughan for support, only to learn she is nowhere to be found. National Crime Agency investigator Guy Bernhardt asks Nikki to help him by employing pathologist David Cannon, the chief suspect in Sally's disappearance. Meanwhile, a body found in a reservoir is linked to a murder case from 16 years previously. Return of the crime drama, starring Emilia Fox, with Julian Rhind-Tutt and Alex Macqueen.

TUESDAY

Working Class White Men Channel 4, 10pm
The first of a two-part documentary in which Professor Green finds out what life in modern Britain is like for working-class men in different parts of the country. He begins by meeting Lewis, who has his heart set on going to Cambridge University but is up against a culture of low expectations, Essex boy Deniz, an aspiring entrepreneur with numerous money-making schemes on the go, and unemployed David, who is currently living in a homeless hostel in Bolton and is

on the verge of becoming involved in far-right politics.

WEDNESDAY

Kiri Channel 4, 9pm
Two Bafta-winners – Jack Thorne, the writer behind National Treasure, and actress Sarah Lancashire, who picked up awards for Happy Valley and Last Tango in Halifax – team up for this highly anticipated new drama. Lancashire stars as Miriam, a no-nonsense social worker who takes an instinctive approach to protecting the children in her care. But her methods are called into question when she arranges for Kiri, a black girl who is about to be adopted by her white foster family, to have an unsupervised visit with her biological grandparents, only for the youngster to then disappear. The police, the press and even her colleagues seem to blame Miriam, but as the media spotlight intensifies, both sets of families also face some difficult questions.

THURSDAY

Big Cats BBC1, 8pm
We are in a golden age of natural

world television. However, of all the rare and fascinating creatures that have been caught on camera of late, there is still one group of animals that enthrall us more than any other – the big cats. They are the planet's top predators, yet even in this remarkable animal family, some members stand



Transformation Street, Thursday, ITV, 9pm

Transformation Street ITV, 9pm

From firemen to soldiers, railway workers to writers, this three-part series follows the extraordinary transformations of men and women who all believe they were born into the wrong body. Filmed over a 12-month period, cameras have been given unprecedented access to a private clinic on Wimpole Street in London, run by world-renowned plastic surgeon Christopher Ingfield. Tonight we meet 20-year-old Lucas, who was born a girl but has been living as a man for two years. He arrives at the clinic with his mum Karen, for a consultation about having his breasts removed. Railway worker Wendy, 43, is also about to undergo her gender confirmation surgery at the clinic. After counting down the days for thirty years, Wendy is determined to have the female body that she felt should have been hers at birth and to have her male genitals removed.

FRIDAY

The Wine Show Channel 5, 7pm
New series. Actors Matthew Goode and James Purefoy travel to the south of France to find wines to accompany a six-course lunch chosen by Michelin-starred chef Stephane Reynaud.

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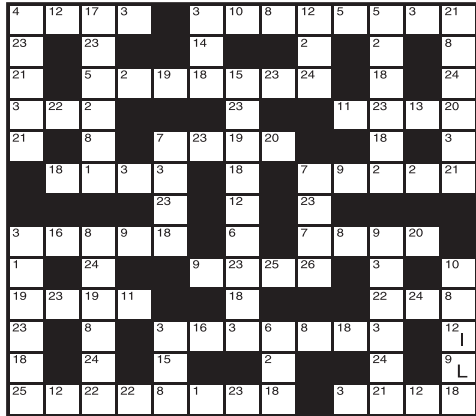
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BRAIN GYM

No.461

Codeword

Each number in the grid represents a different letter of the alphabet and every letter of the alphabet is used. Use the given letter(s) to the right of the main grid to start you off.



LAST WEEK'S SOLUTION:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
O	F	H	T	M	Z	A	U	D	P	V	Y	X	K	B	J	R	N	G	W	I	E	L	C	S	Q

Double Crossword

Choose either quick or cryptic clues - both fit the same grid.

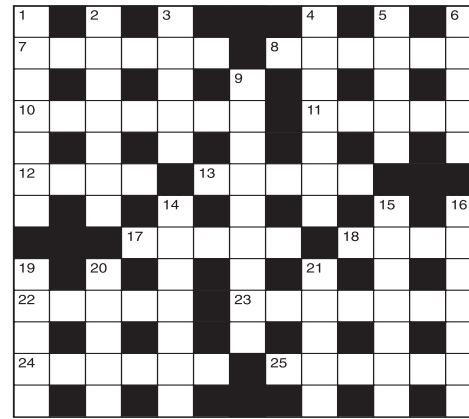
Cryptic Clues:

Across

7. Changes which should be made by wrongdoers (6)
8. The source of a writer's material (6)
10. Send a boat down for coal (7)
11. Piece of land is on lease (5)
12. Some pay earned for a period (4)
13. Hides one's relatives on board (5)
17. A view that makes sense (5)
18. A pressing need (4)
22. Unusually eager to come to terms (5)
23. Smoke and produce an angry reaction (7)
24. Something to read in bed? (6)
25. They work to avoid discord (6)

Down

1. It sees or can be seen in the dark (4,3)
2. It has no meaning (7)
3. Revises information about tides (5)
4. Sensing change they finish top of the staff perhaps (7)
5. Upset to make light of (5)
6. Speak for the government? (5)
9. It may be adjusted for the rest of the holiday (4,5)
14. Generous in providing a form of Braille (7)
15. There are all types in his trade (7)
16. Concentrated in a nervous way (7)
19. One with no faith in father backing a horse (5)
20. Body in the baggage (5)
21. Brush and clean thoroughly (5)



Quick Clues:

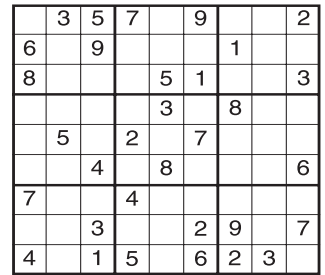
Across

7. Mend (6)
8. Hurry (6)
10. Guard (7)
11. Pamphlet (5)
12. Pitcher (4)
13. Underneath (5)
17. Ill-defined (5)
18. Independent (4)
22. Depress (5)
23. Honest (7)
24. Noiseless (6)
25. Style (6)

Down

1. Seer (7)
2. Against (7)
3. Compare (5)
4. Wariness (7)
5. Filch (5)
6. Concord (5)
9. Energetic (9)
14. Tramp (7)
15. Bandit (7)
16. Bonds (7)
19. Near (5)
20. Reside (5)
21. Fracture (5)

Sudoku



Fill in the grid above so that every column, every row and each of the 3x3 boxes contains all the digits from 1 to 9.

LAST WEEK'S SOLUTIONS >

7	2	6	4	9	3	8	1	5
4	1	5	6	8	2	3	7	9
9	3	8	5	1	7	6	4	2
5	6	1	3	4	9	7	2	8
3	4	7	2	5	8	1	9	6
2	8	9	1	7	6	5	3	4
6	5	2	7	3	4	9	8	1
1	9	3	8	2	5	6	4	7
8	7	4	9	6	1	2	5	3

LAST WEEK'S CROSSWORD SOLUTIONS:
 CRYPTIC - Across: 1 Poker; 4 Varnish; 8 Opinion; 9 Cream; 10 Lees; 11 Fortress; 13 Book; 14 Flog; 16 Tranquil; 17 Heat; 20 Chide; 21 Embargo; 22 Lighter; 23 Thyme.
 Down: 1 Problematical; 2 Knife; 3 Rail; 4 Vendor; 5 Recitals; 6 Iceberg; 7 Home sweet home; 12 Conquest; 13 Bearing; 15 Linear; 18 Early; 19 Abut.
 QUICK - Across: 1 Rival; 4 Diverts; 8 Fatuous; 9 Ledge; 10 Idle; 11 Profound; 13 Etna; 14 Heat; 16 Archives; 17 Part; 20 Irate; 21 Elevate; 22 Natural; 23 Dress.
 Down: 1 Refrigeration; 2 Vital; 3 Loot; 4 Desert; 5 Villified; 6 Redoubt; 7 Steadfastness; 12 Engineer; 13 Enchant; 15 Reveal; 18 Abate; 19 Send.

Quiz

1. In which bay is the island of Capri?
2. Which soprano was born Helen Porter Mitchell?
3. In which city were the Plymouth Brethren founded?
4. In which Austrian city was Mozart born?
5. What was the Beatles' own record label called?
6. Which city's Roman name was Durovernum?
7. Which Royal's middle names are Elizabeth Alice Louise?
8. Which Radio 4 show did Kenneth Robinson present for 15 years?
9. Of what is the tog a unit of measurement?
10. Of which country was Victor Emmanuel proclaimed king in 1861?

Last week's solutions:

Quiz: 1 Edward VII; 2 White dove; 3 Grampians; 4 Crimean; 5 A tree; 6 Woody Woodpecker; 7 Bob Dylan; 8 Sarajevo; 9 Henrik Ibsen; 10 Vega.

Niner: FLOUNDERS

Niner

Each number from 1 to 9 represents a different letter. Solve the clues and insert the letters in the appropriate squares to discover a word which uses all nine letters.

12736
2933458
2769

gives a fish,
gives a second fish,
gives a third fish.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---



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Resident's family member

Why carvery did not pack a Punch

THE staff were brilliant. The chef at the carvery was cracking jokes about venison and Bambi.

The guy at the bar was having a meltdown within 10 minutes of opening and the front of house staff were directing customers like traffic cops at a busy road junction.

The Punch Bowl Inn, at Bridgnorth, offers a multi-award-winning AGA Carvery, decent value for money and delightful local ales. It's steeped in tradition, serves quality traditional food and drink and has been recognised by the local Camra branch for real ale.

And while it offers function rooms, a venue for weddings, guest rooms, a la carte menus and more, it's best known for its Sunday lunches.

SENSIBLE

Try calling on a Sunday morning and you're likely to be told: 'Sorry, we're full'. I know. I've tried. This time I took the sensible option and booked well in advance.

When my friend and I arrived for a Sunday service, a queue had formed outside shortly before the venue's 12 noon opening. On a cool, crisp winter's morning, they hovered near to the Punch Bowl's garden, which provides magnificent views across the countryside.

As the clock struck 12, a click of the latch signalled the start of service and the early bird arrivals shuffled inside. All of which meant the bar resembled the check-in desk for a Ryanair flight to Alicante during mid-Summer.

Lunch at the Punch Bowl isn't quite a bun fight. It's far too civilised for that. But there's something curious about going out to eat then forming an orderly queue, like Soviet-era Russians waiting for bread. The serving area is a vast, heated pass, behind which stands an AGA. Vast joints of roasted meat waiting for customers

Variety of vegetables along with different potato dishes



while large bowls of vegetables and sides offer further sustenance. Our options were beef, turkey, pork, ham and venison, sliced by a cheerful chef with Shropshire's sharpest knife – and tongue. When my friend asked for venison, he quipped: "Nice, eating a bit of Bambi, are we?" Boom. Boom.

He garlanded my plate with a slice of beef, a tender piece of sweet, pink ham and a less-than-impressive piece of pork, which was much too fatty. And then we strolled past the Punch Bowl serving bowls, garnishing our plates with roast potatoes, parsnips, peas, carrots,

garlic potatoes, Yorkshire puddings and more. The roast potatoes were good, though they'd lost a little of their crunch by standing on the pass. The parsnips were a treat, nicely caramelised and pleasingly sweet. The peas and carrots were a little too watery but the garlicky potatoes and cauliflower cheese were great. The Yorkshire puddings were nicely risen while a range of sauces – cranberry, apple, gravy et al – were suited to all-comers.

But it wasn't as enjoyable as it ought to have been. The gravy didn't pack a punch. The apple sauce wasn't

particularly sharp. And though the garlic potatoes and cauliflower cheese were pleasant, other bits were bland.

The biggest problem was that the food – with the exception of the meat – was luke warm, not piping hot, and lost a little along the way.

We skipped desserts. We felt like we'd been the participants in some form of Food Olympics and there was insufficient room for a round of sweetened carbs. And as the other guests continued to tuck into their carvery dinners while the staff prepared for the 2pm sitting, we made our exit.

ANDY RICHARDSON

The Sunday special roast lunch proves very popular



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Dreamgirls

Inspired by the true story of Diana Ross and The Supremes, this Tony award-winning musical directed and choreographed by Casey Nicholaw (The Book of Mormon, Aladdin, Something Rotten!) tells the story of 'The Dreams', a young female singing trio from Chicago, who have to learn the hard way that the road to stardom has a lot of deep holes and deadly traps.

Songs include And I Am Telling You I'm Not Going, Listen, One Night Only and I Am Changing. Enjoy this fantastic production at the Savoy Theatre now!

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Departing Friday 26 Jan

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- ✓ 2 nights B&B at the Ibis Shepherd's Bush Hotel, London
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- ✓ Free time in London

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★★★★★
"A dazzling show"
Evening Standard

Kinky Boots

Faced with bankruptcy due to competition from foreign sources, one small village's shoe factory owner embarks on a daringly different business strategy, ladies' shoes in men's sizes for the drag queen and cross-dresser market.

This true story, which in 2005 was released as a successful film, is the tale of W.J. Brooks Ltd of Earls Barton, Northampton, and its startling move into fetish footwear under the "Divine" brand. With an original score by Cyndi Lauper, this story then became a multiple Tony-award winning Broadway show, later crossing the Atlantic to London's Adelphi Theatre.

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Omega Holidays cannot be held responsible for the non-appearance of a particular actor/actress; no refunds will be given in this event. Whilst we always try to ensure that parties are seated together, very occasionally, it may be necessary for parties to be split. Couples are always seated together. Tours offered subject to availability. Errors and omissions excepted. Prices shown are per person, based on two people sharing a dbl/twin room. Single supplements apply.



Modern purpose-built apartment in a convenient location for town centre on sale with no chain

A modern purpose-built apartment in a convenient location for Halesowen town centre, this two-bedroomed property is also within easy travelling distance of the motorway network.

It is for sale through Hicks Hadley at £99,000 with no chain.

The property's accommodation briefly comprises of a lounge, fitted kitchen, a master bedroom with a balcony, a second bedroom and a bathroom. The property also

HALESOWEN £99,000

benefits from allocated parking and communal grounds.

In more detail the communal entrance hall has an intercom entry system. The lounge has a feature fireplace with a fitted fire and laminate flooring.

The kitchen is fitted with wall and

base units with work surfaces over, a single drainer sink, an integrated electric oven and hob with extractor over and plumbing for a washing machine. Bedroom one has a patio doors leading out to the balcony, while bedroom two has a storage cupboard.

The bathroom has a bath with a shower over.

Contact Hicks Hadley on 0121 585 6667 or visit www.hickshadley.com



Four-double bedroomed detached residence is in a secluded position and close to village amenities

In a secluded position, well placed for sought after schools and village shops, restaurants and amenities, this four-double-bedroomed detached residence is for sale through Taylors at £465,000.

The property is set back beyond the generous driveway with a double garage and has a private level rear garden. A position and setting which certainly enhances, it has an exceptionally spacious and very well-proportioned layout of

KINGSWINFORD £465,000

well planned accommodation all of which is beautifully presented and well appointed throughout.

This briefly comprises of an imposing reception hall with an oak floor which has doors opening to the principal ground floor accommodation, including the WC, a huge sitting room with

a conservatory off, a formal dining room and the family dining kitchen with appliances which has a further conservatory off.

From the galleried-style landing are the four double bedrooms, the master bedroom having a refitted en-suite shower room and there is a refitted luxury house bathroom.

Contact Taylors on 01384 401777 or visit www.taylors-estateagents.co.uk

Halesowen Office Lettings & Property Management



HALESOWEN, Naseby Drive£1,200 pcm+Fees
●● 1ST MONTHS RENT HALF PRICE. DONT MISS OUT ON THIS OFFER ●● A superb modern detached family home in a quiet cul de sac on the Squires estate. Reception hallway, guest cloakroom, spacious lounge leading to dining room, fitted kitchen, 3 good size bedrooms & family shower room, gas central heating, double glazed, large driveway, carport & garage. New carpets to be fitted downstairs & redecorated. EPC: D



HALESOWEN, Lutley Avenue£1,000 pcm+Fees
A unique modern individually designed 3 bedroom detached house with a lovely wooded rear aspect to Lutley. Featuring large open plan living room with wooden floors and French doors leading to a private decking area, contemporary kitchen with oven/hob & dishwasher, utility room, downstairs WC, 3 generous size bedrooms, en-suite, beautiful modern bathroom with shower, gas central heated and double glazed throughout. EPC: TBC



HALESOWEN, Narrow Lane£995 pcm+Fees
A FANTASTIC OPPORTUNITY to rent this semi detached large family home which has been totally refurbished to a very high standard including a new block paved driveway in this very popular location close to all bus & train links. 2 large reception rooms, beautiful fitted kitchen, utility, private rear garden, 3 good sized bedrooms, family bathroom with shower. AVAILABLE SOON!! EPC: TBC



AMBLECOTE, Audnum £795 pcm+Fees
A fantastic opportunity to rent a home on a select development. 'Crystal Gardens' featuring 3 generous size bedrooms (master with en-suite) finished to an exceptional standard. This home features a spacious lounge/dining area, well appointed kitchen, downstairs WC, the 1st floor has 2 bedrooms & a family bathroom & on the 2nd floor there is a master bedroom with a large en-suite, 2 allocated parking spaces, front & rear gardens. EPC: B



NETHERTON, Racemeadow Crescent£750 pcm+Fees
A lovely modern 3 bedroom detached house in a popular area close to schools and transport links. With entrance hall, large lounge, separate dining room, kitchen with appliances, downstairs w.c., south facing rear garden, 3 good sized bedrooms, master en-suite & fitted wardrobes, family bathroom, gas central heating & double glazed. A large corner plot with garage & driveway parking. A beautiful property not to be missed!! EPC: TBC



STOURBRIDGE, Hungry Hill£750 pcm+Fees
Refurbished in the last 9 months. This large bay fronted detached home is close to Stourbridge Train Station and shops. Featuring a large through lounge with patio doors leading to a patio area and garden, modern kitchen, W.C, 3 good size bedrooms, modern bathroom with shower with the toilet separate, drive and garage. EPC: TBC



HALESOWEN, Ashville Drive£725 pcm+Fees
An unfurnished detached house in a popular area, briefly comprising of: gas central heating, 2 reception rooms, fitted kitchen, downstairs wc, 3 bedrooms, bathroom with shower, front & rear gardens, garage & driveway parking, within easy reach of Halesowen College & town centre. EPC: TBC



STOURBRIDGE, Birmingham Street£700 pcm+Fees
●● UNDERGOING A MAJOR REFURBISHMENT ●● This beautiful property is close to Stourbridge Train Station and the Town Centre. Featuring a front reception room, large kitchen diner, 2 double bedrooms and 1 single bedroom, house bathroom with a separate double shower cubical, large tiered low maintenance garden, driveway for 1 car and a garage. TENANT TO SUPPLY OWN WHITE GOODS AND COOKER. EPC: TBC



BRIERLEY HILL, Walker Avenue£675 pcm+Fees
A modern semi-detached house offering spacious family which has been re-furnished in the last 9 months. This large family home features an entrance hallway, large lounge, fitted kitchen, 3 good size bedrooms, new bathroom with shower, driveway parking & garage. EPC: TBC



BRIERLEY HILL, Wychbury Road£650 pcm+Fees
●● 1ST MONTHS RENT HALF PRICE! DONT MISS OUT ON THIS OFFER ●● This lovely semi detached house is ideally located for Merry Hill, Thorne College and local primary schools. Featuring an extended lounge & kitchen, dining area, 3 good bedrooms, house bathroom with shower, tandem garage, front and rear gardens, central heating and double glazing. EPC: D



CRADLEY HEATH, Graingers Lane£625 pcm+Fees
●● NOBODY HAS LIVED IN THIS PROPERTY ●● A brand new build end terrace property with 1 allocated parking space at the rear, located close to Cradley Heath Train Station and the Town Centre. Featuring 2 double bedrooms, fitted kitchen, lounge with patio doors leading to a small rear garden, downstairs WC. A property not to be missed!! EPC: TBC



BRIERLEY HILL, Hordern Crescent£625 pcm+Fees
Delightful 3 bedroom semi-detached house in this popular location comprising of: entrance porch, lounge with stairs off, fitted kitchen/dining area, 3 good size bedrooms, modern bathroom with shower, newly fitted gas central heating, front & rear gardens & driveway parking for 2 cars. EPC: F



HALESOWEN, Brett Young Close£625 pcm+Fees
An impressive 2nd floor apartment within walking distance to Halesowen Town Centre. This modern apartment features 2 double bedrooms, master bedroom with en-suite shower room, spacious open plan lounge, kitchen, bathroom with shower, allocating parking. Also benefits from gas central heating and double glazing. MINIMUM CONTRACT 12 MONTHS. EPC: B



HALESOWEN/BLACKHEATH, Holt Road£595 pcm+Fees
Minutes away from Rowley Regis Train Station, not far from the M5 J2 and Blackheath Town Centre. A nicely presented refurbished mid terrace house. Featuring 2 double bedrooms and 1 single bedroom, 2 spacious reception rooms, fitted kitchen with oven/hob, downstairs bathroom with shower, double glazing, gas central heating, small rear garden, on road parking. EPC: D



HALESOWEN, Dudley Road£595 pcm+Fees
●● 1ST MONTHS RENT HALF PRICE. DONT MISS OUT ON THIS OFFER ●● A 2 bedroom detached bungalow in this very convenient location. Newly decorated with a brand new kitchen & bathroom this property offers a large lounge, fitted kitchen with oven/hob, bathroom with shower, 2 good size bedrooms, gas central heating, front & rear garden, garage & driveway. EPC: E



HALESOWEN, Lyttleton House£595 pcm+Fees
An attractively positioned, 1 bedroom, purpose built over 60s retirement apartment in Halesowen Town Centre. Featuring large communal lounge, gardens and launderette facilities and lift access. This ground floor apartment is accessed via the secure intercom communal hallway. The apartment features a kitchen with fridge freezer, double bedroom with built in wardrobe, shower room, spacious lounge, electric storage heating and parking. Price to include water rates. EPC: TBC



HALESOWEN/BLACKHEATH, Victoria Road£575 pcm+Fees
Well presented and not to be missed. Set within a popular residential area close to Blackheath Town Centre, this unfurnished semi detached house comprises of a modern living room, fitted kitchen, 3 bedrooms, house bathroom with shower. Benefits also include gas central heating, rear garden, driveway parking. EPC: TBC



HALESOWEN, Milverton Close£575 pcm+Fees
A modern part furnished to suit 2 bedroom ground floor flat in this very popular residential area comprising of: large lounge, 2 double bedrooms, fitted kitchen with appliances, bathroom with shower, gas central heating, parking space. EPC: D



HALESOWEN, Princess Crescent£575 pcm+Fees
An unfurnished modern 1st floor apartment in a sought after cul-de-sac location. Featuring electric storage heating, good size living room, fitted kitchen, 2 good size bedrooms, bathroom with shower, communal garden, garage & driveway parking. EPC: F



BRIERLEY HILL, Goldthorn Walk£575 pcm+Fees
An unfurnished semi detached house, close to local shops in Withymoor, and set in a quiet road. This lovely home features 1 double and 1 single bedroom, fitted kitchen, gas central heating, double glazing, lounge, bathroom with shower, garage and driveway parking, gardens. EPC: E



NETHERTON, Purlin Wharf £550 pcm+Fees
A very presentable unfurnished top floor apartment on this popular development overlooking the canal featuring 2 double bedrooms, spacious lounge, fitted kitchen with oven/hob and washer/dryer, master bedroom with en-suite, family bathroom with shower, double glazing, electric storage heating, one allocated parking space. Viewing highly recommended. EPC: TBC

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MOTURING

Ford scrappage extended and Fiesta leads market

UK market leader Ford announces the extension of its successful scrappage scheme as Ford CV sales and share increase in November's CV market and sales of the all-new Fiesta reinforce its leadership of the market.

According to the official November sales figures from the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders (SMMT):

- Ford is the UK market leader in total vehicle, car and CV sales
- Fiesta is UK best-seller; Transit Custom first in CV and sixth in total vehicle charts
- Transit range is second in UK total vehicle sales

● Ford has five models in the UK Top 20 – Fiesta (1st), Focus (4th), Transit Custom (6th), Kuga (12th) and Transit (20th)

The Ford scrappage scheme, which includes cars and CVs, has been extended into the first quarter of 2018. The success of the scheme, which has seen over 10,500 vehicles scrapped and replaced with cleaner, more fuel efficient vehicles, is expanded to include the Ford Ranger as well as the most popular all-new Fiesta, Focus and Transit CV models.

Andy Barratt, Ford of Britain chairman and managing director, said: "The Ford scrappage scheme has been so well received by our customers and I'm pleased to announce its extension in to next year."

"We have an excellent product line-up and our scheme is applicable to one of the broadest ranges of vehicles, including the



Ford's scrappage scheme now extends to the Ford Ranger

segment leading Ford Ranger. We continue to carry strong sales momentum as we move towards the end of the year.

"Our CV sales growth was particularly positive in an increasingly challenging market."

"It's also rewarding to see the all-new Fiesta strengthening its leadership position as we continue the launch of the full model range, with Fiesta Active and ST still to come to complete the line-up of our most technologically advanced Fiesta ever."

The official figures released by the SMMT show that total car sales in November were down 11.2 per cent to 163,541 units, compared

with November 2016. For the year to date (end November) UK car sales were 2,338,144, down five per cent compared with the same period in 2016.

Ford car sales for this period were 271,855 some 78,738 registrations ahead of its nearest rival.

Ford is the clear leader in retail car sales, which most accurately reflect the preferences of private buyers. At 11.7 per cent, Ford's November retail car sales share was 3.9 percentage points ahead of its nearest rival, and for the year to date, Ford's retail car sales share was 11.7 per cent.

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Referee Bill Turley flanked by his assistants Harry Worrall and Terry Connolly



The ref is resplendent in white boots



Harry Worrall runs the line at age of 79



Terry Connolly, aged 72, keeps up with play



Match referee Bill Turley gives the red card to age



The cameras are rolling as the match officials are filmed

No signs of flagging from the men in black

THERE is no substitute for experience, so the old adage goes. And that was certainly the case when the officials trotted out for a recent clash in the Wolverhampton Sunday League.

The combined age of the men in black who took charge of the top-flight showdown between Penn Tandoori Sundats and AFC Jacks totalled 219 years.

Man in the middle Bill Turley clocked in at the tender age of 68 while his flag waving assistants, Terry Connolly and Harry Worrall, are 72 and 79 respectively.

And the occasion is set to gain national attention thanks to the presence of the Sky TV cameras.

Sky presenter Johnny Phillips, a columnist with The Chronicle's sister publication The Express & Star, was in attendance at Wolverhampton Casuals' Brinsford Lane having heard about the trio's appointment when he was guest speaker at a recent Wolverhampton Referees Association meeting.

Popular

The three wise men were brought to the screen over the festive period when they featured on the popular Soccer Saturday show hosted by Jeff Stelling.

And with the cameras rolling, the banter was soon flowing between the trio and Wolverhampton Referees Association chairman Phil Reade, the man responsible for appointing officials to Wolverhampton Sunday League games.

"Bill reckons the players say he looks like Gerry Francis, with his hair like that. I reckon it's more Peter Stringfellow!" quipped Phil.

"Bill is a larger than life character and Harry is really well known having been a referee for over 50 years, while Terry is probably the quieter one.

"All three of them are well respected around the local leagues and they enjoy a chat and a bit of banter with the players.

"It's great that they are getting some recognition for what they do and it's also good publicity for the league and the refs' association.

"We are the biggest association in the country and we have quite a number of refs who are aged 50 or above. This was a big game but I don't look at ages

SPORTING FEATURE

By Nick Elwell

"I have been refereeing for 20 years and I really enjoy it. It gets me out and it still gives me that buzz."

when I make the appointments. I just look at whether they can handle the game.

"All three of them are experienced refs who know how to handle players. And they did a good job, just don't remind me about Bill's white boots!"

The white boots will see plenty of action this season with Bill likely to clock up a century of games during the course of the campaign.

And the Pendeford-based former publican has no plans to call time on his refereeing days anytime soon.

"Since I retired and I am free in the week, my phone never stops ringing," said Bill, who was amateur with Wolves and whose son, Billy, played professionally as a goalkeeper for Northampton Town, Oxford and Rushden & Diamonds.

"I referee in the Wolverhampton Sunday, the Midland Junior Premier on Saturdays, the Midland Junior Floodlit League and also school and college games.

"Over the course of the season I will do over 100 games. I love it. I'm not a young man but I am fit for my age. I'm an ex semi-pro and I know the game.

"I have been refereeing for 20 years and I really enjoy it. It gets me out and it still gives me that buzz. I love the banter because that's the sort of player I was. I talk to players, I'm a communicator.

"The one thing I don't like is when they get personal and backchat. If they do that, then I clamp down on that."

As for the white boots...

"The story behind the white boots is that they were my son's," added Bill. "He used to give me his boots - I must have 15 pairs still to wear.

"There is nothing in the rules to say you can't wear

white boots. I'm a colourful character. I'm a bouncy sort of bloke and if my boots are the only talking point then I have done a good job."

Footwear seemed to be a bit of theme on the morning of the game with Harry having splashed out on a new pair. And, like Bill, he will clock up fair few miles in them as he enters his 51st year as a referee.

"I still do the occasional senior game, but it's mainly youth games for me," says Harry, who lives in East Park.

"And I will carry on as long as the old knees keep up. I have a tablet each morning and put some muscle rub and knee supports on, and that does the trick.

"I felt great at the end of the game on Sunday and I still enjoy it. I lost my wife 16 years ago and football is what keeps me going. I love my football.

"But the game is not like it used to be. There is a lack of respect towards referees these days. You get the manager on the touchline having a go and that filters through to the players.

"You have to have a word with them but I haven't got a card out for ages. I prefer to talk to players, it's all about man management. Anyone can get a card out."

Stopped

Terry, 72, is the least experienced of the trio having only decided to pick up a whistle 10 years ago.

But he still boasts plenty of footballing nous having run various youth teams from Bushbury youth club for over 40 years.

"I have been refereeing for about 10 years," he said.

"I used to run football and then stopped to raise a family. But I came back to the sport 10 years ago wanting to be a referee.

"Similar to Harry, I lost my wife and football is a big part of my life and keeps me active.

"I usually do three or four games a weekend and also referee five-a-side at Codsall School on a Monday.

"I do adults and juniors, Wolverhampton Sunday League, Beacon League and the Midland Junior League. I enjoy it so much, that's why I do some many games.

"As long as my legs keep carrying me about I will carry on. I really do sleep well on a Sunday and Monday after all the games. But by the next weekend I am fine to go again."

Rider in support plea as he pursues dream

A CYCLIST from the Black Country is aiming to get to the top of his sport - and is calling on support from the area to help him.

Former Wolverhampton Wheelers rider Adam Lewis moved to Belgium four years ago to pursue his riding dream and has been signed up for team T Palm Pole Continental Waloon, which is in the third division of cycling. It means he will be competing in professional races in France, Belgium and Luxembourg from February, but he must pay for himself.

The 22-year-old from Willenhall says he needs around £5,000 to cover the first eight months of the season, paying for rent, food and coaching and has set up an online funding page.

Lewis said: "I will be racing throughout Europe in some of the most prestigious pro races in France, Belgium, Luxembourg to name just a few. Unfortunately, due to being a third division team they are not required to pay a salary which means my budget is extremely tight."

Visit www.gofundme.com/support-adams-pro-cycling-dream

Premier debut is a Goldson gift

FORMER team-mate Andre Gray led the tributes after Connor Goldson made an emotional Premier League debut for Brighton & Hove Albion.

Wolverhampton-born Goldson was named man of the match in the December 23 clash, after shutting out Gray's Watford on his top-flight bow - 10 months after being withdrawn from action to have heart surgery.

And though Goldson's performance condemned Watford to a fourth straight defeat, Gray could not hide his delight on social media.

Posting a picture of the duo contesting for possession on Twitter, Gray wrote: "From Sunday League Deansfield young boys to the Premier League, against all odds, we did what no-one could dreamed of... not even us I don't think!! Connor Goldson, I'm proud of you beyond belief, you've come through more than I can imagine and now we here! Man of the match on debut

speaks for itself. Love you bro." The duo represented Wolverhampton Schools as youngsters before getting their break at Shrewsbury Town.

Although Gray would have to leave for non-league Hinkley, before rising through the ranks with Luton, Brentford, Burnley and now Watford; Goldson established himself in Shropshire.

He helped guide Town to promotion from League Two - and was named in the League Two team of the year - before linking up with Brighton, who were promoted last season under Chris Hughton, although Goldson missed the end of the campaign after a routine heart screening revealed a suspected defect.

After making his debut, Seagulls boss Hughton said: "It's a happy changing room for Connor, because he's a very popular player. We all know what he went through. You have to wait for your chance and I thought he was very good."



Andre Gray and Connor Goldson during the match

Sport

SPORTS DESK 01902 319531

Football officials are showing age red card

Page 35



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Applause in honour of ex-keeper

A MINUTE'S applause was held before Stourbridge FC's fixture against Rushall Olympic on New Year's Day in memory of their former keeper Derek Dudley, who also played for Aston Villa and Albion.

Mr Dudley, of Rugeley, who spent four years at Villa in the 1980s and also played for the Baggies, died on New Year's Eve.

Mr Dudley, 47, also used to play for Halesowen Town and Chasetown.

On the field, Stourbridge eased to a convincing 5-0 victory, making it nine goals without reply in two games.

Kaiman Anderson opened the scoring and a Leon Broadhurst penalty made it two at the break.

Tom Tonks netted the third and Matt Dodd and sub Luke Shearer completed the rout.

On Saturday, Stourbridge put a stop to their recent slide down the table by sinking strugglers Marine with a four-goal salvo.

Glassboys struck through Darryl Westlake, a Broadhurst penalty, Luke Benbow's long-awaited 100th club goal and substitute Josh Cooke.

It had been a festive period to forget for Glassboys up to that point. They were pegged back by 10-man Whitby, Broadhurst spot-on again, before a single goal defeat at Stafford Rangers on Boxing Day. Stafford's Massiah McDonald struck the only goal of the game on 76 minutes.

Death of boxing referee aged 76

ONE of the world's top boxing referees, who hailed from the Black Country, has died aged 76.

Paul Thomas, born in Brierley Hill, had kept order in almost 300 world title fights. He also officiated thousands of fights in the West Midlands as a judge.

Mr Thomas eventually moved to Derby but son Dean, 52 and one of three children, insists his father always saw himself as a West Midlander.

"I can remember him taking me to the (Wolverhampton) Civic Hall to see all the local fights before he became a referee," he said.

"It was around 1977 or 78 that he started as a referee and you have to finish when you are 65, but then he still did some work overseas. All in all, it was near on 40 years as a referee."

Dean added: "He went on to live in Derby but the Black Country is his roots."

The funeral is at the Markeaton Crematorium in Derby at 2pm on January 12.

Top half in sights after thumping victory

STOURBRIDGE Chess Club have played their last two matches of 2017.

In Birmingham division 4 the second team were at home to Walsall Kipping. Martin Berridge drew on board three and Jeremy Humphries followed suit on board five.

On board 4, Richard Wilkinson was soon a pawn up against Doreen Anderson which eventually became a full piece and Doreen resigned when about to lose more material.

On board 6, Colin Woodall brought home a

point and John Foxall won on board one. Finally Eric Horwill and his opponent agreed a draw so a thumping 4.5-1.5 win for Stourbridge, who should finish in the top half of the division if they continue to play like this.

The first team played away at Kidderminster in a rearranged Worcester and District Division 1 fixture. On board 2, team captain Paul Sharratt had the better of his game and was a pawn up and in the better position in the middle game, but failed to sustain the advantage and settled for the

draw. On board 3 Julie Wilson won a pawn and exchanged queens early on but also ended in a draw.

Sam Bradley played soundly throughout and accepted the draw with Stourbridge ahead on board one, where Zibi Koncki won his game and the match.

This is the first time Stourbridge have played in this league and this was an excellent start.

Anyone interested in joining Stourbridge chess club should contact Dave Scriven on 01384 423642 or visit www.stourbridgechess.f9.co.uk

RIVALS BEATEN IN VITAL WIN

Sutton Coldfield Town 0 Halesowen 1
HALESOWEN began the new year with a vital away win at relegation rivals.

Jordan Goddard grabbed the only goal of the game for a battling Yeltz side on New Year's Day.

But it could have been a more decisive success, with Sutton forced to defend for most of the game.

Ethan Jones shot just wide for the visitors on just four minutes. Then Exodus Geohagion saw a header from a corner saved on 12 minutes.

Halesowen looked in control and the pattern continued in the second half. Goddard had a great chance on 54 minutes but shot over.

But he made no mistake a minute later when he fired into the top corner to give Halesowen three valuable points.

Halesowen Town 1 Buxton 3
ON Saturday, Yeltz slumped to defeat with Liam Hardy completing a hat-trick in the first half-hour.

Buxton took just 18 seconds to find the net when Geohagion lost the ball allowing Joe McGee to cross for the unmarked Hardy to crack home from ten yards and doubled Buxton's lead in the 29th minute with a delightful finish.

Just a minute later Hardy completed his second hat-trick of the festive period with a confident finish across Dan Platt after Kyle Morrison had failed to clear.

The Yeltz pulled a goal back in the 36th minute when John McAtee broke away and crossed for Enock Ekongo to hit a low shot underneath defender Matt Baker and goalkeeper Jan Budtz.

Halesowen 0 Mickleover 0
HALESOWEN were reduced to nine men but held on to claim a point in a disappointing Boxing Day stalemate against an out of form Mickleover outfit.

Bradley Lewis was dismissed in the 71st minute for a second yellow card and with eight minutes to go captain Ivor Lawton was shown a straight red card for a foul. The visitors, featuring Pablo Mills and Clinton Morrison failed to capitalise.

Moving tribute to club mascot



Fiancee Carly and son Archie cuddle an Albi toy during the tribute to Richard Eades, inset

ALBION players and fans joined heartbroken family members in a moving tribute to former club mascot Richard Eades.

The players donned black armbands at the New Year's Eve match against Arsenal in memory of the club stalwart, who died just hours before the Boxing Day home fixture against Everton at the age of 42.

Richard, from Wednesbury, spent nearly 30 years associated with his beloved Albion - where he was most recently known as the man inside the costume of Baggie Bird's sidekick

Albi. Richard's death sparked scores of messages paying tribute to the father-of-two, who was also a highly-respected referee with the Birmingham County FA. His family, fiancee Carly and their two children, Lily-Mae, aged eight, and Archie, three, took to the pitch ahead of the 1-1 draw with Arsenal. Mascots from Villa, Blues, Wolves and Walsall joined Baggie Bird on the Hawthorns pitch to remember him.

Fans held a minute's applause on the 42nd minute with Baggies boss Alan Pardew also seen joining in.

Pottinger is new boss at Lakeside

CRADLEY Heathens team boss Will Pottinger has been appointed as manager of Lakeside speedway team. He will, however, remain with the Heathens for their National Trophy campaign.

The Vortex Hammers are preparing for an exciting year after moving up into the SGB Championship.

Pottinger was approached for the job after Kelvin Tatum relinquished the role due to other commitments.

It is a big step for the 30-year-old, who has enjoyed remarkable success with the Heathens in the National League but is now set to test himself at a higher level with the Essex-based outfit.

And he said he could not wait to get started at the Arena-Essex Raceway.

"It's a great privilege to be asked by Lakeside to manage their team, so it's something I'm really looking forward to," Pottinger said.

"I helped Lakeside out on three occasions last season, managing them when Kelvin Tatum was unavailable, and I obviously made an impression which has led to this opportunity.

"It's nice to be asked to take on a job in the Championship, and although it's going to be a challenge I'd like to think I'm ready for it.

"Lakeside have put a very strong side together, and I've dealt most of the riders at some time or another.

"I imagine there won't be too much bedding in time for me which is good, and I'm looking forward to getting started."

Proudlock wins the battle of ex-Wolves

TWO former Wolves strikers went head-to-head in the dugouts - and Adam Proudlock got the better of Lee Mills.

Newport Town, managed by Proudlock, kept up their title charge in West Midlands League Division One on Saturday with a 3-1 win at Team Dudley, where Mills is boss.

Mills spent three years at Molineux, from 1992 until 1995, while Proudlock came through the youth ranks and figured for them between 1998 and 2003.

Second-half goals from Rob Millington, who was then sent off, Jay Russell, via the penalty spot, and Ed James saw Newport to victory.

★★★

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